

XU XIANZHE
& ZHANG XIAO

4

TOKYOPOP®



ASSASSIN'S
CREED

DYNASTY

STOP

THIS IS THE BACK OF THE BOOK!

How do you read manga-style? It's simple!
Let's practice -- just start in the top right
panel and follow the numbers below!



**READ
RIGHT
TO
LEFT**



MASTER LI BAI!

THE TWENTY-FOUR COUNTIES OF HEBEI ARE THE LANDS OF YAN AND ZHAO. SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, THERE HAVE BEEN MANY GENEROUS AND ELEGIAC PEOPLE WHO RESIDE IN THESE LANDS. I BELIEVE THAT MANY NAMELESS WARRIORS AND VALIANT HEROES ARE FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE IN THE DARK, PROTESTING IN THEIR OWN WAY. OUR IGNORANCE OF THEIR RIGHTEOUS EFFORTS RIGHT NOW DOES NOT MEAN THEY DO NOT EXIST. SOMEONE WILL EVENTUALLY STAND UP AND UNITE THOSE INVISIBLE FORCES TO RESIST THIS DARK NIGHT TOGETHER.

I JUST RECEIVED A SECRET REPORT FROM THE PALACE SERVANTS. HIS MAJESTY HAS DECIDED TO LEAVE CHANG'AN AND TAKE REFUGE IN THE SHU KINGDOM. I WILL ALSO FOLLOW HIS MAJESTY AND EMBARK ON A JOURNEY WITH MY LIFE ON THE LINE ONCE AGAIN. THE ROAD TO THE SHU KINGDOM IS FRAUGHT WITH OBSTACLES, AND YOU SHOULD KNOW THIS EVEN BETTER THAN I DO. HOWEVER, HAVING BEEN ON THE EDGE OF DEATH BEFORE, I BELIEVE I'LL BE ABLE TO PUSH THROUGH UNTIL THE END.

MAY WE CONTINUE TO PERSEVERE AND MOVE FORWARD IN OUR OWN WAYS, UNTIL THE BRIGHT MOON BREAKS THROUGH THE DARK CLOUDS.

- CHAO HENG (ABE NO NAKAMARO)



THE INFORMATION IN THESE LETTERS IS RELIABLE. AFTER ALL, AS THE FORMER SECRETARY OF THE TANG DYNASTY, I HAVE ACCESS TO TENS OF THOUSANDS OF VOLUMES OF BOOKS AND RECORDS IN THE ACADEMY OF GATHERED WORTHIES AT ANY TIME. THIS IS BY FAR MY MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE OF INTELLIGENCE. IN FACT, AS LONG AS WE STUDY THESE RECORDS CAREFULLY, WE CAN SURELY UNCOVER ALL THE SECRETS OF ANCIENT AND MODERN CHINA AND BEYOND.

FOR EXAMPLE, IN A DUSTY CORNER OF THE ACADEMY, THERE IS A TORN AND STRANGE BOOK CALLED "TUI BEI TU." ALTHOUGH THE CONTENT IS OBSCURE AND INCOMPREHENSIBLE, THE PROPHECY IN THE BOOK DOES ALLUDE TO WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE. IT EVEN PREDICTED AN LUSHAN'S REBELLION THAT OCCURRED TODAY, AND ALSO OFFERED PROPHECIES FOR A MORE DISTANT FUTURE.

IT'S A PITY THAT I FAILED TO DECIPHER THE COMPLEX MEANING OF ITS CONTENTS AT THAT TIME, AND I COULD NOT TAKE IT WITH ME WHEN I LEFT THE CAPITAL IN A HURRY. ONLY REGRET STAYS WITH ME ABOUT THIS. PRESENTLY, IT SHOULD BE LYING QUIETLY IN A CORNER OF THE ACADEMY OF GATHERED WORTHIES. I HOPE IT CAN ESCAPE THE MILITARY CHAOS LIKE THE BUDDHA RELICS PROTECTED BY MASTER JIANZHEN AND WILL NOT BE DESTROYED OR BURNED.

THE BOOK STATES THAT THIS IS AN ANCIENT STRUGGLE—A BATTLE OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS. IT IS ALSO A WAR BETWEEN JUSTICE AND POWER, FREEDOM AND SLAVERY.

WE USED TO LIVE IN A WORLD OF PEACE, AND WE ENDED UP FORGETTING ABOUT THE COMING OF CALAMITY. WE SQUANDERED THOSE GOOD TIMES, FORGETTING THAT HISTORY ALWAYS REPEATS ITSELF. OUR OPINIONS DON'T MATTER, AND WE MUST BEGIN TO FACE THE AGE OF STRIFE AND SUFFERING. ALL OF THIS HAS BEEN CAUSED BY THE INTERNAL STRIFE OF THE "GOLDEN TURTLES" AND THE POWER-HUNGRY WHO ABUSE THEIR AUTHORITY AND ENSLAVE THE PEOPLE.

WELL, WHERE ARE THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN IN THE SHADOWS FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, FIGHTING FOR EQUALITY AND FREEDOM?

JUST LIKE THE UNJUST KILLINGS OF GENERAL GAO AND GENERAL FENG'ER, YANG GUOZHONG ALSO WANTED TO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET RID OF HIS SUCCESSOR, GE SHUHAN. DESPITE KNOWING THIS, I AM HELPLESS TO INTERVENE.

ACCORDING TO THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY YANG GUOZHONG, THE VANGUARD TROOPS OF AN LUSHAN ARE NOW ALL OLD, WEAK, SICKLY, SLOPPY, AND LOW IN MORALE. THE BATTLE-HARDENED GE SHUHAN HAS ALREADY NOTICED THAT THIS IS A TRICK BY THE REBELS TO LURE THEIR ENEMIES. HENCE, HE REFUSED TO GO TO BATTLE. HOWEVER, HIS MAJESTY WAS EAGER TO QUELL THE REBELLION AND BELIEVED THAT THE TANG ARMY HAD ALREADY SECURED THE VICTORY. HE LISTENED TO YANG GUOZHONG'S SLANDERS AND SENT MANY MESSENGERS TO TONGGUAN TO URGE GE SHUHAN TO LEAVE THE PLACE. FACED WITH THESE REPEATED COERCIONS, GE SHUHAN COULD ONLY LAMENT TO THE HEAVENS AS HE LED 200,000 TROOPS OUT OF TONGGUAN TO FIGHT TO THE DEATH WITH THE ENEMY.

OF COURSE, NONE OF THIS WAS A MERE COINCIDENCE. IT WAS A TRAP BY THE ENEMY. THE WELL-PREPARED AMBUSH SOLDIERS SPRANG AN ATTACK ON THE IMPERIAL ARMY. 200,000 IMPERIAL TROOPS WERE WIPED OUT, AND TONGGUAN WAS BREACHED IN NO TIME.

IT'S LIKELY THAT THE REBELS WILL INVADE CHANG'AN AT ANY TIME NOW.

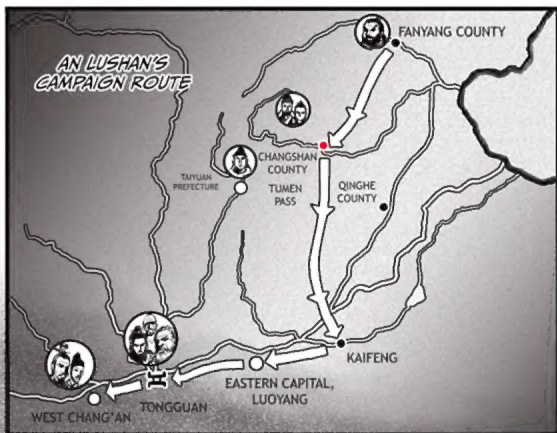
MASTER LI BAI, THE INK I HAVE WITH ME IS RUNNING OUT. PERHAPS THIS WILL BE MY LAST LETTER, THOUGH I HAVE FAITHFULLY RECORDED MY FINDINGS. EVEN IF THESE LETTERS FAIL TO REACH YOU, THEY WILL SERVE TO LET FUTURE GENERATIONS KNOW FRAGMENTS OF WHAT REALLY HAPPENED. WITH THESE PIECES OF INFORMATION, THEY WILL BE ABLE TO PIECE TOGETHER THE COMPLETE TRUTH.

IN THE FIRST MONTH OF THIS YEAR, AN LUSHAN ESTABLISHED A PUPPET DYNASTY IN LUOYANG AND PROCLAIMED HIMSELF EMPEROR. AFTER ENDLESS MASSACRES AND LOOTING, AN LUSHAN'S REBEL ARMY HAS LONG LOST THE SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE. HAVING LOST THE TRUST OF THE PEOPLE, HIS DAYS WILL COME TO AN END SOON.

I HEARD THAT WANG CHENGYE, THE YULIN GENERAL, ASSASSINATED THREE REBEL GENERALS AT TUMEN PASS, AND PRESENTED THE THREE 'GOLDEN TURTLE TOKENS' CARRIED BY THE REBEL GENERALS TO HIS MAJESTY. THIS RARE PIECE OF GOOD NEWS PLEASED HIS MAJESTY GREATLY, AND HE IMMEDIATELY REWARDED WANG CHENGYE HANDSOMELY. WANG CHENGYE WAS CONFERRED WITH THE TITLE OF YULIN GENERAL AND ENVOY OF HEDONG. WANG CHENGYE ALSO REMAINED IN THE CAPITAL TO ASSIST YANG GUOZHONG WITH MANAGING MATTERS OF UTMOST SECRECY. AT THE SAME TIME, HE SERVES TO ENSURE YANG GUOZHONG'S SAFETY AS WELL.

TRUTH BE TOLD, I HAVE NUMEROUS DOUBTS ABOUT GENERAL WANG CHENGYE. TUMEN PASS WAS A CRUCIAL BATTLEGROUND FOR MILITARY STRATEGISTS OF ALL DYNASTIES, AND THE FAMOUS BATTLE OF JINGXING TOOK PLACE HERE. SINCE WANG CHENGYE SUCCESSFULLY ASSASSINATED THE THREE REBEL GENERALS AND OPENED TUMEN PASS, WHY DIDN'T HE GARRISON THE ARMY TO STAND FIRM AND, INSTEAD, HEADED OUT TO CHANG'AN TO CLAIM CREDIT? I ADVISED HIS MAJESTY TO INVESTIGATE THE MATTER IN DETAIL, BUT HIS MAJESTY ONLY PAID ATTENTION TO THINGS HE WANTED TO HEAR. HENCE, ALL MY ADVICE WAS IN VAIN.

NOW, I HAVE LOST THE OPPORTUNITY TO REMONSTRATE BECAUSE THE 'GOLDEN TURTLES'-LED BY YANG GUOZHONG—CLOSELY SURROUND HIS MAJESTY. THEY BLIND THE EYES AND COVER THE EARS OF HIS MAJESTY, SO I'M NO LONGER ABLE TO SPEAK WITH HIS MAJESTY ALONE. TO AVOID RISKING MYSELF, I CAN ONLY REMAIN SILENT. ALL THESE WORDS I CANNOT SPEAK CAN ONLY BE WRITTEN TO YOU, MASTER LI BAI.





"LI LINFU

**(THE FIRST
YEAR OF
HONGDAO -
THE TWELFTH
YEAR OF
TIANBAO.)"**

TWENTY YEARS AGO, LI LINFU, THE LEADER OF THE 'GOLDEN TURTLES', BECAME THE PRIME MINISTER AND HELD UNFATHOMABLE POWER OVER THE GOVERNMENT. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE POWER OF THE GOLDEN TURTLES BALLOONED AS WELL, AND THINGS STARTED TO CHANGE SUBTLY.

LI LINFU USED INSIDIOUS AND VICIOUS MEANS TO ELIMINATE DISSIDENTS, AND EVEN ACTIVELY SUPPORTED THE GENERALS AT THE BORDER IN ORDER TO SUPPRESS THE PRINCE'S FACTION. HE SUPPORTED AN LUSHAN, A NEW MEMBER OF THE GOLDEN TURTLES, TO SET UP "YELUOHE" AT THE BORDER IN A BID TO STRENGTHEN THE MILITARY MIGHT OF THE GOLDEN TURTLES.

LI LINFU WAS AN INSCRUTABLE MAN, BUT HE HAD THE ABILITY TO READ OTHERS LIKE THE BACK OF HIS PALM.

THEREFORE, YANG GUOZHONG AND AN LUSHAN, MEMBERS OF THE GOLDEN TURTLES, WERE BOTH IN AWE AND FEAR OF THIS HONEY-MOUTHED LEADER WITH A VICIOUS MIND. WORD HAD IT THAT LI LINFU MANAGED TO GRASP ALL OF AN LUSHAN'S HIDDEN INTENTIONS EACH TIME THEY CONVERSED WITH EACH OTHER, LEAVING AN LUSHAN JITTERY BEYOND COMPARE. HENCE, LI LINFU ALWAYS HAD YANG GUOZHONG AND AN LUSHAN IN THE PALM OF HIS HAND, AND IT HAD BEEN HARD FOR THE TWO TO ACT ON THEIR AMBITIONS. THIS SITUATION PERSISTED UNTIL FOUR YEARS AGO, WHEN LI LINFU DIED AT THE AGE OF SEVENTY. THE IMPERIAL COURT ANNOUNCED THAT HE DIED OF ILLNESS, BUT THERE ARE ALSO RUMORS THAT HE WAS ASSASSINATED BY A MYSTERIOUS MAN.

IT'S NOT A SURPRISE THAT LI LINFU MADE MANY ENEMIES IN THE IMPERIAL COURT OVER HIS TWENTY YEARS OF POWER. DEATH BY ASSASSINATION WOULD NOT BE PARTICULARLY STRANGE. HOWEVER, LI LINFU WAS WELL AWARE OF HIS NUMEROUS ADVERSARIES AND WAS ALWAYS ON GUARD. ANXIETY PLAGUED HIM, AND HE WOULD CHANGE HIS RESIDENCE EVERY DAY. EVEN HIS FAMILY WAS UNAWARE OF HIS WHEREABOUTS. WELL, WHO IS THIS FORMIDABLE FIGURE WHO ASSASSINATED THE PRIME MINISTER? IF IT WAS AN ASSASSIN, WHO IS THE MASTERMIND OF THIS ENTIRE AFFAIR?

I ONLY KNOW THAT YANG GUOZHONG AND AN LUSHAN WERE THE ONES WHO YEARNED FOR LI LINFU'S DOWNFALL THE MOST. BEFORE LI LINFU WAS BURIED, YANG GUOZHONG AND AN LUSHAN JOINED FORCES TO FALSELY ACCUSE LI LINFU OF TREASON. AS A RESULT, LI LINFU WAS STRIPPED OF HIS POSITION AND CONDEMNED TO BE A COMMONER. ALL HIS ASSETS WERE CONFISCATED, AND HIS CHILDREN WERE EXILED TO THE BORDER. HIS CONSORT KIN, YANG GUOZHONG, SUCCESSFULLY TOOK HIS PLACE AND SUCCEEDED HIM AS PRIME MINISTER. THIS TURN OF EVENTS GREATLY DISPLEASED AN LUSHAN.

AN LUSHAN AND YANG GUOZHONG PLOTTED AND SCHEMED TO COMPETE FOR THE LEADER OF THE GOLDEN TURTLES, CLASHING AT EVERY POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY. THEIR RIVALRY EVENTUALLY LED TO THE PRESENT TURMOIL.

FISH TOKENS



DURING ANY MAJOR EVENTS IN THE COUNTRY TOKENS WILL BE BROUGHT OUT. THERE ARE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE LEFT AND RIGHT HALVES, WITH THE RIGHT AS THE IDEAL, THE LEFT WOULD BE LACKING IN PARTS TO MATCH ITS RIGHT HALF.

FIRSTLY, BRONZE FISH TOKENS ARE GIVEN TO THE MILITARY TASKED WITH LONG MARCHES AND GUARD DUTIES. SECONDLY, PASSAGE TOKENS ARE GIVEN TO MESSENGERS TASKED TO CONVEY ORDERS.

THIRDLY, FISH TOKENS TO BE CARRIED ON A PERSON ARE GIVEN TO COMMENDABLE NOBLES AND CITIZENS AND PRODUCED WHEN THEY WERE SUMMONED.

THE SYSTEM OF FISH TOKENS IS AS SUCH: THREE LEFT TOKENS AND ONE RIGHT TOKEN FOR THOSE NEAR THE CAPITAL; FIVE LEFT TOKENS AND ONE RIGHT TOKEN FAR FROM THE CAPITAL. HOLDERS OF THE LEFT TOKENS ARE WITHIN THE CAPITAL, WHILE HOLDERS OF THE RIGHT TOKEN ARE OUTSIDE THE CAPITAL.

AS FOR FISH TOKENS CARRIED ON A PERSON, THERE ARE ALWAYS TWO LEFT HALVES AND ONE RIGHT HALF. THE CROWN PRINCE POSSESSES A JADE TOKEN, THE PRINCE POSSESSES A GOLD TOKEN, AND OFFICIALS HAVE BRONZE TOKENS. TOKENS ENGRAVED WITH NAMES ARE GIVEN TO OFFICIALS WHEN THEY RISE TO A POST. TOKENS WITHOUT NAMES CAN BE PASSED ON FROM PERSON TO PERSON.

— THE SIX CLASSICS OF THE TANG DYNASTY, VOLUME EIGHT, CHANCELLERY

TURTLE TOKENS



THE IMPERIAL DECREE FROM THE EMPEROR WAS ANNOUNCED IN THE NINTH MONTH OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE EMPEROR'S REIGN (640 A.D., THE ZHOU DYNASTY) TO CHANGE ALL FISH TOKENS TO TURTLE TOKENS. IN THE TENTH MONTH OF THE FIRST YEAR OF JIUSHI'S REIGN, OFFICIALS OF THE THIRD RANK AND HIGHER BORE TURTLE TOKENS MADE OF GOLD. OFFICIALS OF THE FOURTH RANK BORE SILVER TOKENS, AND OFFICIALS OF THE FIFTH RANK BORE BRONZE TOKENS. THE DECREE WAS ISSUED TO ALL OFFICIALS. IN THE SECOND MONTH OF SHENLONG'S REIGN (705 A.D., ZHONGZONG OF TANG RECLAIMED THE THRONE), ALL OFFICIALS WITHIN AND OUTSIDE OF THE IMPERIAL COURT BORE THE FISH TOKEN.

— OLD BOOK OF TANG, VOLUME FORTY-FIVE, TREATISES TWENTY-FIVE, CARRIAGES AND CLOTHES

IN MY LAST LETTER, I RELATED INFORMATION REGARDING THE "GOLDEN TURTLES" AS A SECRET ASSOCIATION FORMED UNDER WU ZETIAN'S RULE. THEY ARE AN ALLIANCE OF CONSORT KIN, POWERFUL MINISTERS, AND EUNUCHS.

HOWEVER, THE "GOLDEN TURTLES" ARE NOT A NEW ORGANIZATION ESTABLISHED BY WU ZETIAN. RATHER, THEY ARE AN ANCIENT LINE OF PEOPLE REFORMED UNDER A NEW NAME. THEY PURSUE "POWER" AND ENACT AN ANCIENT ORDER OF "SLAVERY." THEY ENSLAVE THE PEOPLE WITH THEIR POWER AND ABUSE THEIR AUTHORITY IN THE IMPERIAL COURT. THEY ARE THE MASTERMINDS BEHIND EVIL IN THIS WORLD.

AFTER THE RESTORATION OF THE TANG DYNASTY, THE GOLDEN TURTLES ALSO WEAKENED GREATLY. HIS MAJESTY'S ERA OF KAIYUAN THUS BEGAN. TO THIS DAY, I STILL DEARLY MISS THE PROSPEROUS AND WONDERFUL TANG DYNASTY OF THAT TIME.

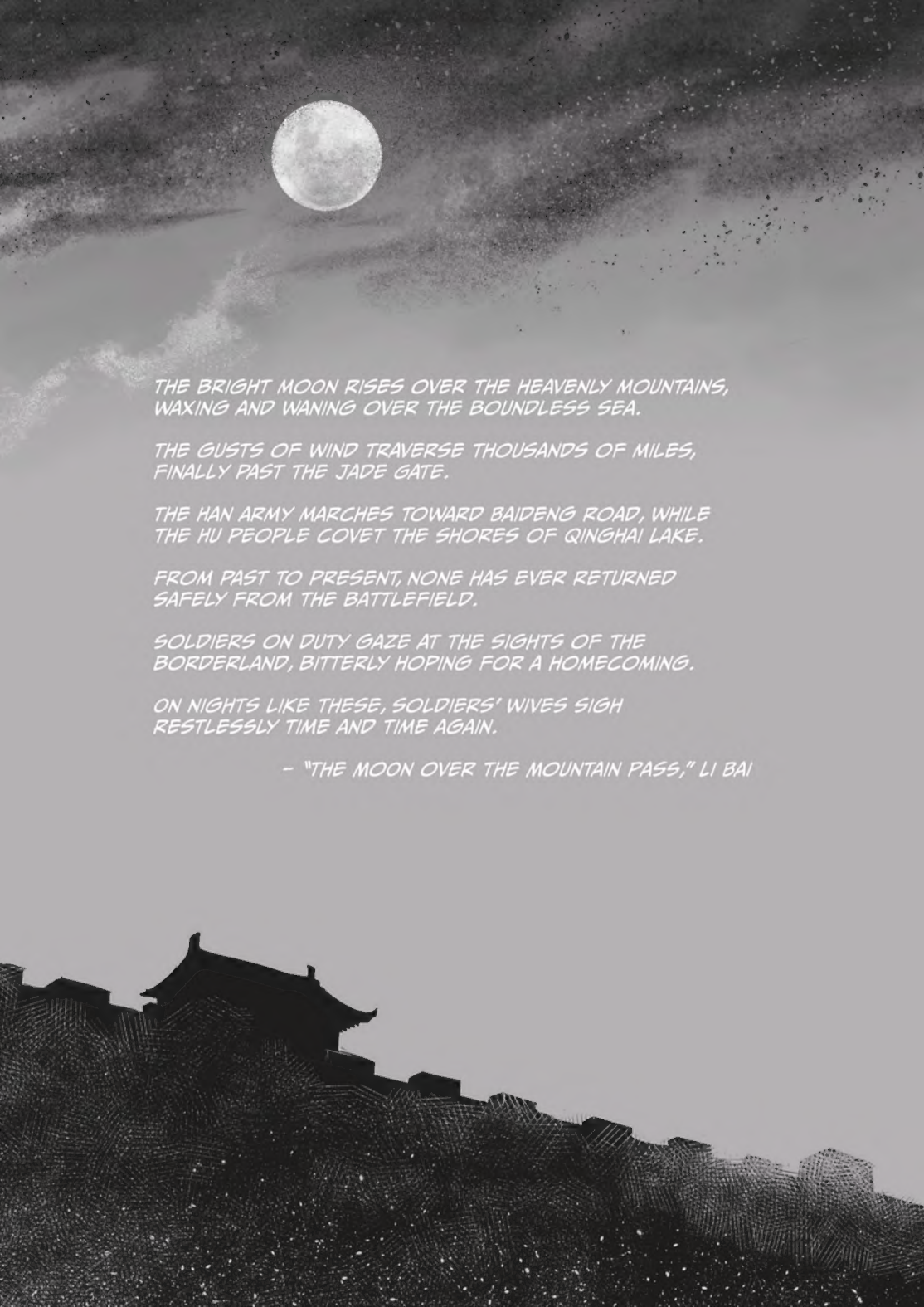
PAYING RESPECTS TO LI BAI—

MASTER LI BAI, I'M FINALLY CLOSE TO UNCOVERING THE TRUTH.
WHERE SHOULD I START?
WELL, I'LL BEGIN WITH THE ORIGINS OF EVERYTHING.

IN THE I CHING, A STATEMENT UNDER THE "GE" HEXAGRAM SEGMENT STATES:
"THE REVOLUTIONS AGAINST KING TANG OF SHANG AND KING WU OF ZHOU
WERE VALIANT ONES DICTATED BY THE HEAVENS AND IN RESPONSE TO THE
PEOPLE'S HEARTS." TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO, THE EMPEROR OF THE XIA
DYNASTY WAS OVERTHROWN, AND CHINA BEGAN THE PRACTICE OF CHANGING STATES
DYNASTIES. DURING THE SPRING AND AUTUMN PERIOD AND THE WARRING STATES
PERIOD, THE CENTRAL PLAINS WERE CONSUMED BY CHAOS AND DIVISION. ALL
REGIONS BEGAN COMPETING FOR MILITARY MIGHT AND STATE GOVERNANCE.
SUCH A DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD REQUIRED A LARGE NUMBER OF SAGES
AND WISE MEN TO GUIDE THE WAY TO SALVATION. THEREFORE, DURING THIS
PERIOD OF TIME, COUNTLESS IDEOLOGICAL SYSTEMS APPEARED IN CHINA—"THE
HUNDRED SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT." FOUR OUT OF THESE HUNDRED SCHOOLS OF
THOUGHT ARE COMMONLY KNOWN TO ALL: TAOISM, WHICH ADVOCATED INACTION;
MOHISM, WHICH ADVOCATED QUALITY; LEGALISM, WHICH ADVOCATED ORDER; AND
CONFUCIANISM, WHICH ADVOCATED BENEVOLENT GOVERNANCE.

THE MEETING OF THESE DIFFERENT SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT AND GROUPS, THEIR
CONFLICT AND CONVERSIONS, PROMOTED THE ADVANCEMENT OF ITS TIME.
UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHIES, THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN
JUSTICE AND POWER, BETWEEN FREEDOM AND SLAVERY, WAS ENDLESS IN THE
VAST LAND OF CHINA. ADVOCATES OF FREEDOM AND PURSUERS OF POWER
HAVE MANIFESTED USING DIFFERENT NAMES AND IN DIFFERENT FORMS OVER
SUCCESSIVE DYNASTIES TO CONFRONT EACH OTHER THROUGH ENDLESS
OPPOSITION AND COLLABORATION.

(NOTE: FOR EASE OF READING, THIS LETTER
HAS BEEN TRANSLATED INTO MODERN TEXT.)



*THE BRIGHT MOON RISES OVER THE HEAVENLY MOUNTAINS,
WAXING AND WANING OVER THE BOUNDLESS SEA.*

*THE GUSTS OF WIND TRAVERSE THOUSANDS OF MILES,
FINALLY PAST THE JADE GATE.*


*THE HAN ARMY MARCHES TOWARD BAIDENG ROAD, WHILE
THE HU PEOPLE COVET THE SHORES OF QINGHAI LAKE.*

*FROM PAST TO PRESENT, NONE HAS EVER RETURNED
SAFELY FROM THE BATTLEFIELD.*

*SOLDIERS ON DUTY GAZE AT THE SIGHTS OF THE
BORDERLAND, BITTERLY HOPING FOR A HOMECOMING.*

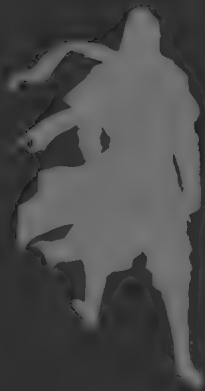
*ON NIGHTS LIKE THESE, SOLDIERS' WIVES SIGH
RESTLESSLY TIME AND TIME AGAIN.*

- "THE MOON OVER THE MOUNTAIN PASS," LI BAI



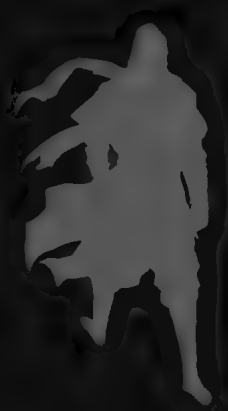
BONUS CONTENT

Decrypting History





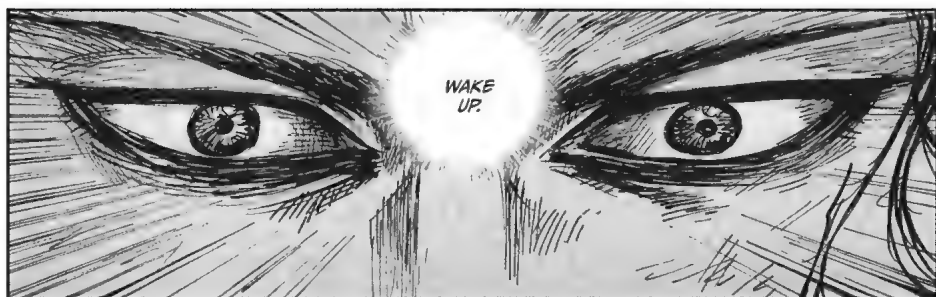
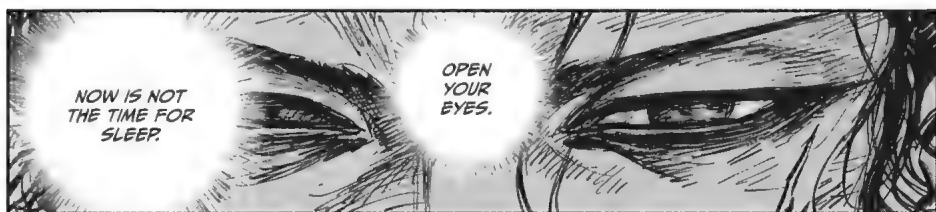
ASSASSIN'S
CREED
DYNASTY



THE HIDDEN
ONES ARE
EVERYWHERE.

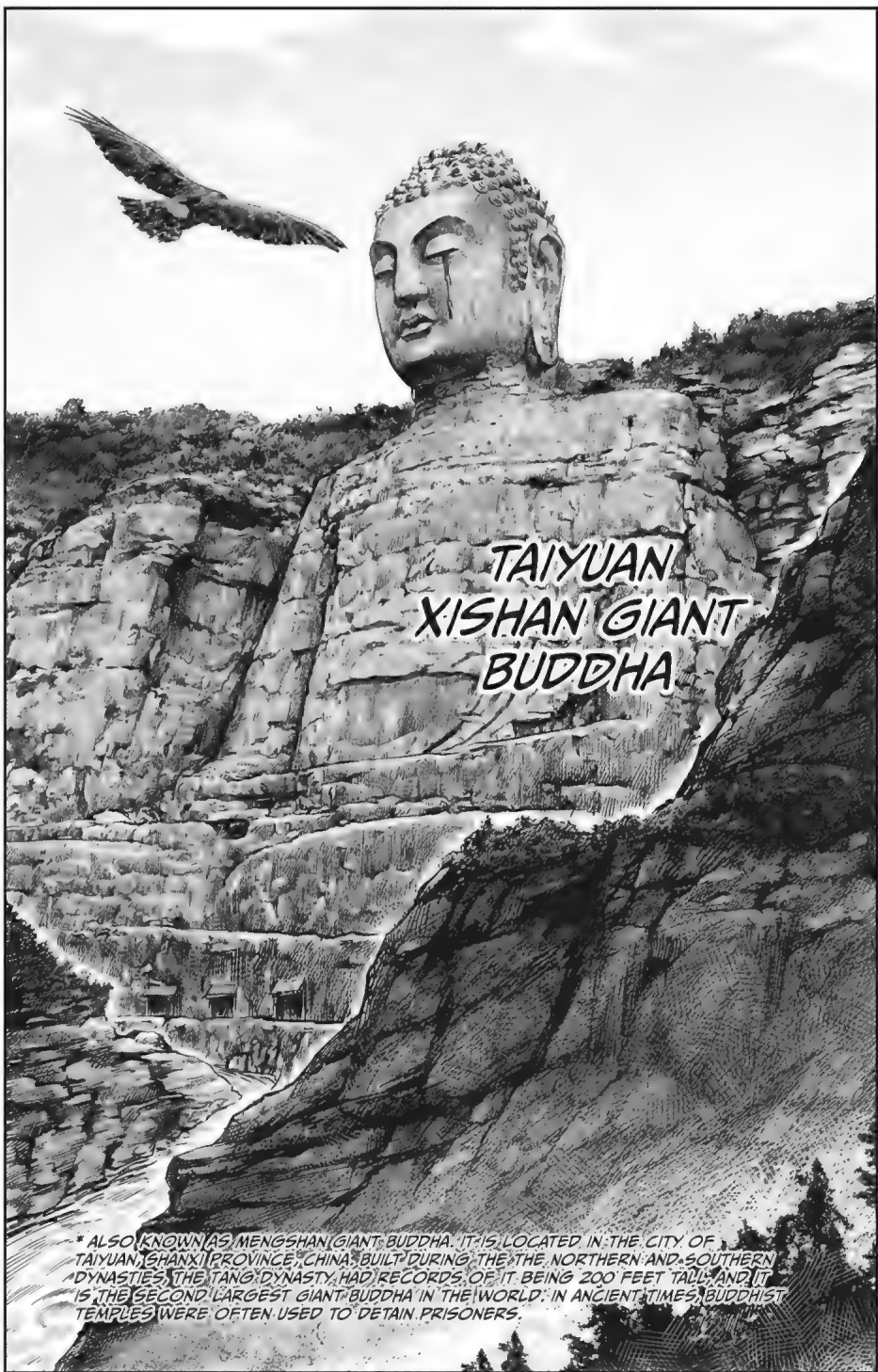




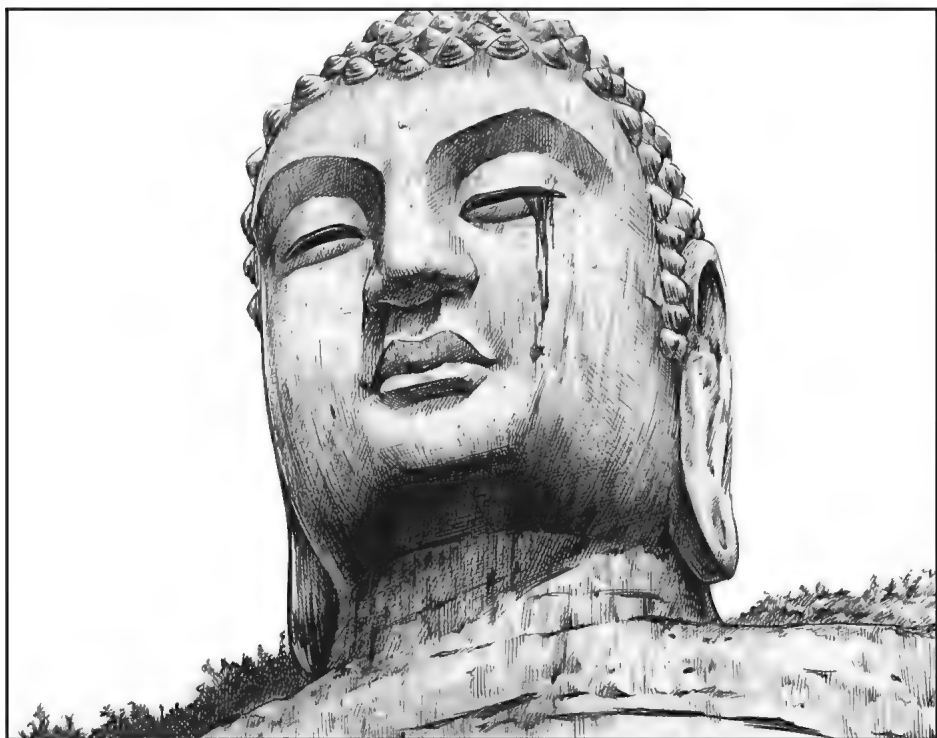


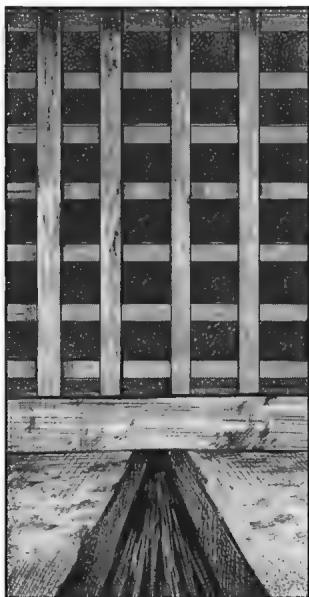
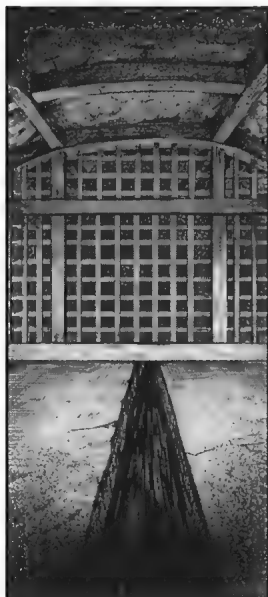


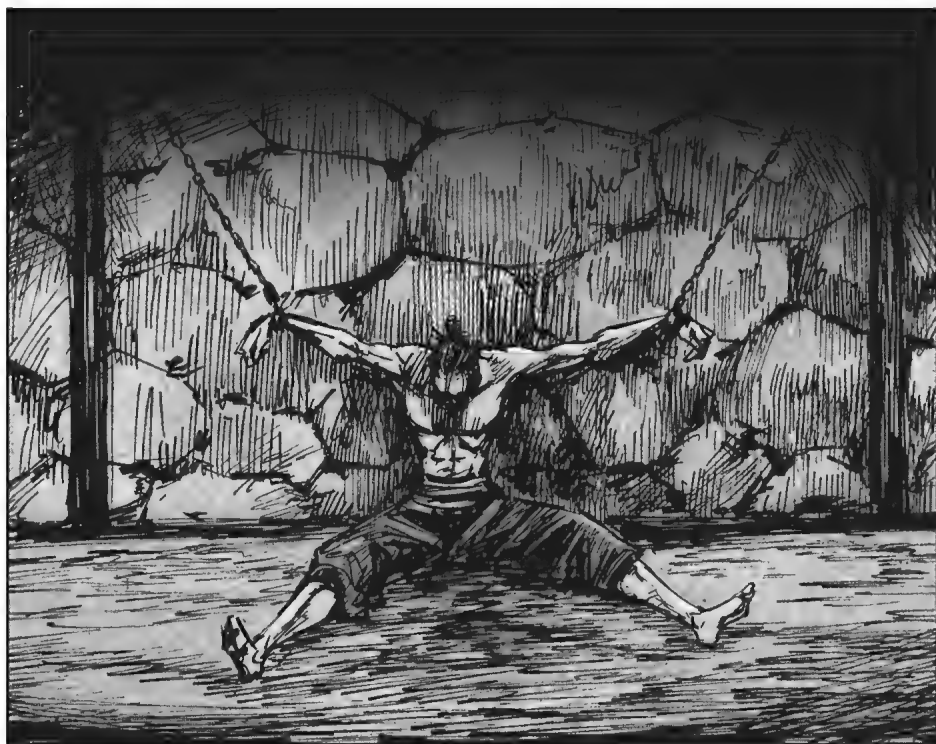
THE LAST STAND OF JUSTICE/FIN.
TO BE CONTINUED.



* ALSO KNOWN AS MENGSHAN GIANT BUDDHA, IT IS LOCATED IN THE CITY OF TAIYUAN, SHANXI PROVINCE, CHINA. BUILT DURING THE THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN DYNASTIES, THE TANG DYNASTY HAD RECORDS OF IT BEING 200 FEET TALL AND IT IS THE SECOND LARGEST GIANT BUDDHA IN THE WORLD. IN ANCIENT TIMES, BUDDHIST TEMPLES WERE OFTEN USED TO DETAIN PRISONERS.





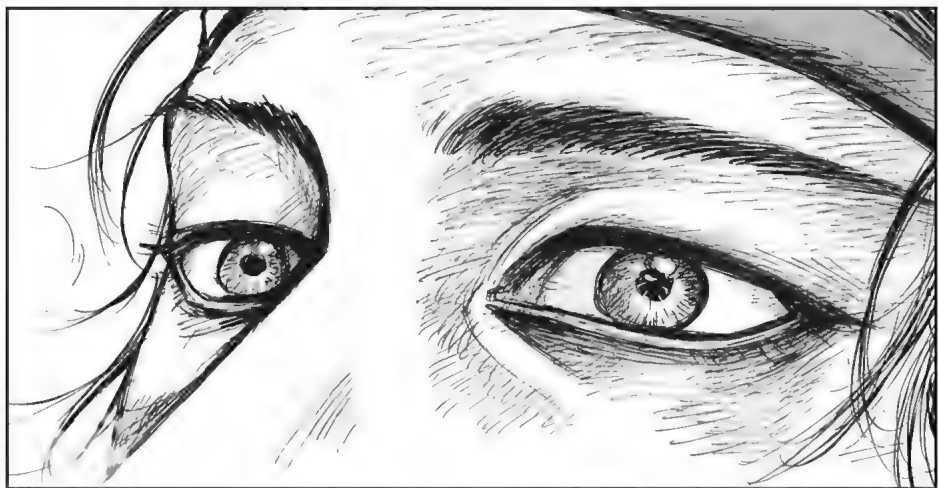















THE YAN
FAMILY
WILL NOT
SURRENDER!













**LIFTED
STRIKE
STANCE!**

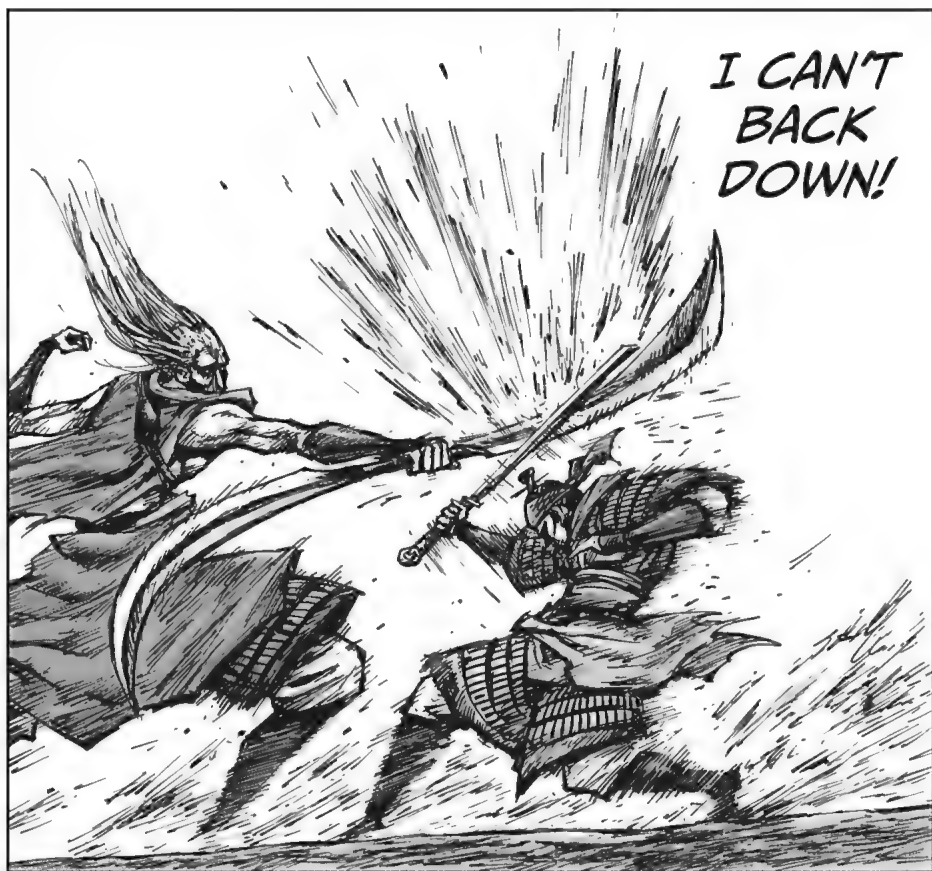


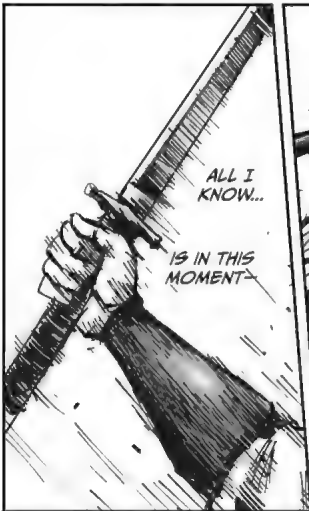
I'M PUTTING
EVERYTHING I HAVE
INTO THIS.













I WILL NO
LONGER
HAVE THE
COURAGE...

TO STARE
DOWN A
FORMIDABLE
ENEMY%

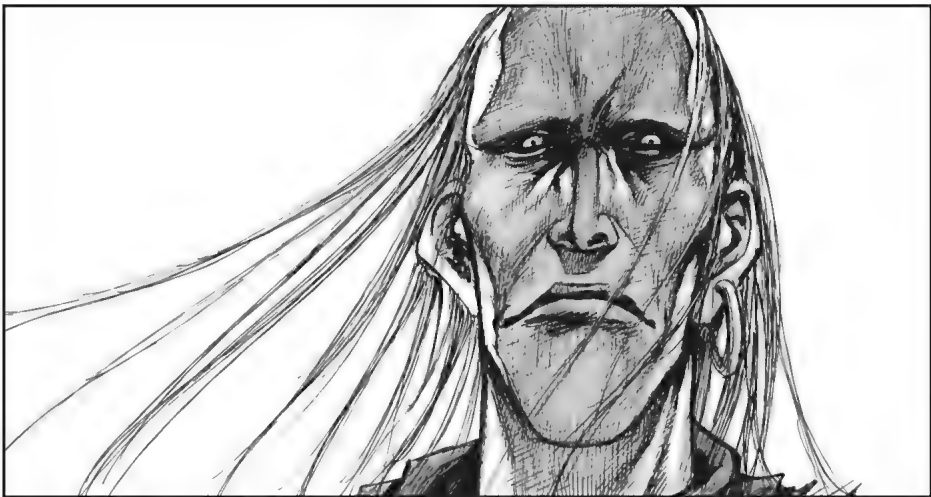


AND IF I
RUN NOW...

MY LEGACY WILL
BE AVOIDANCE AND
REGRET.



I WILL NO
LONGER BE
ABLE TO FACE
MYSELF.























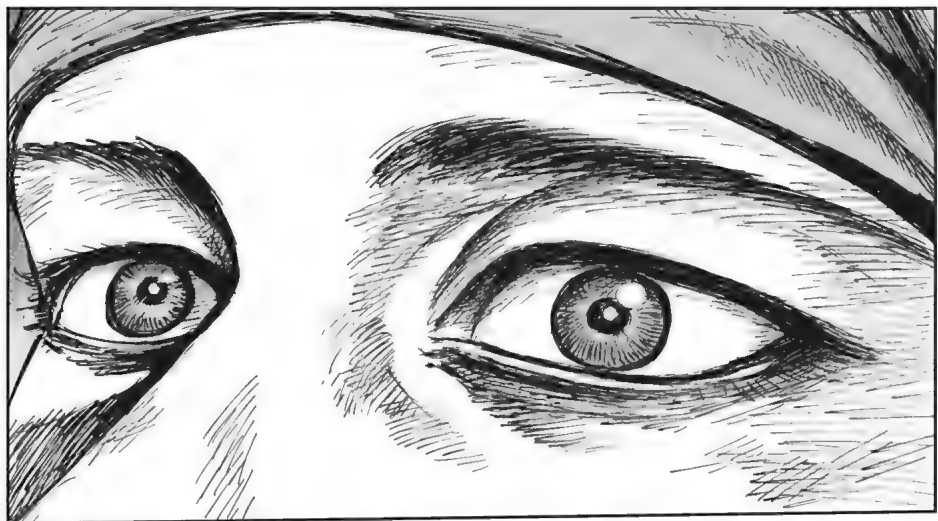
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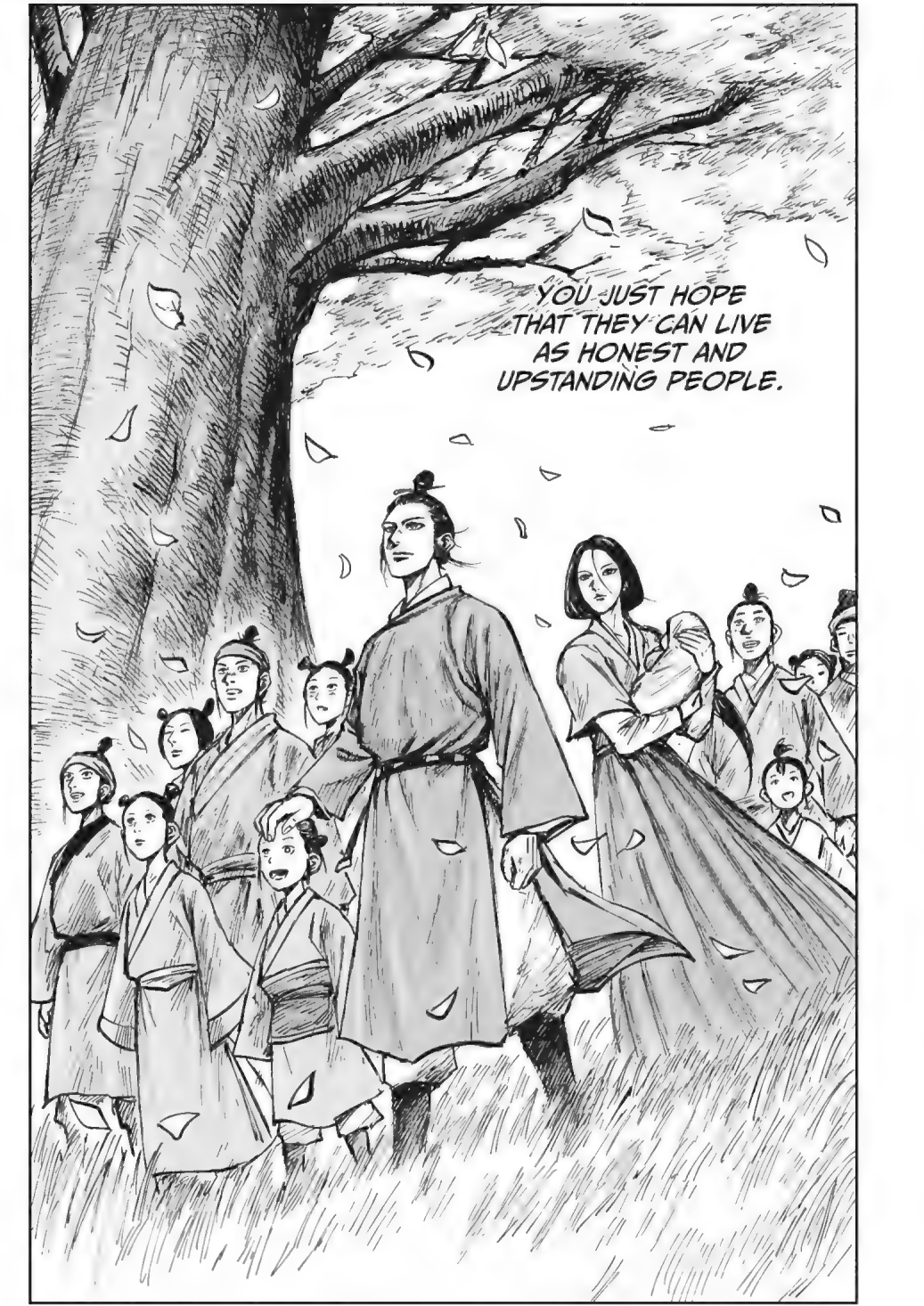




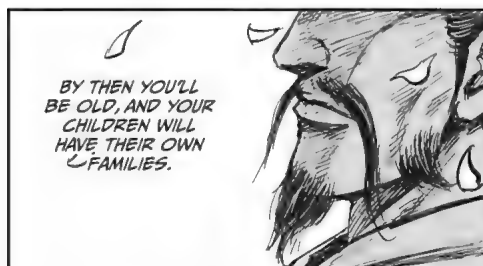


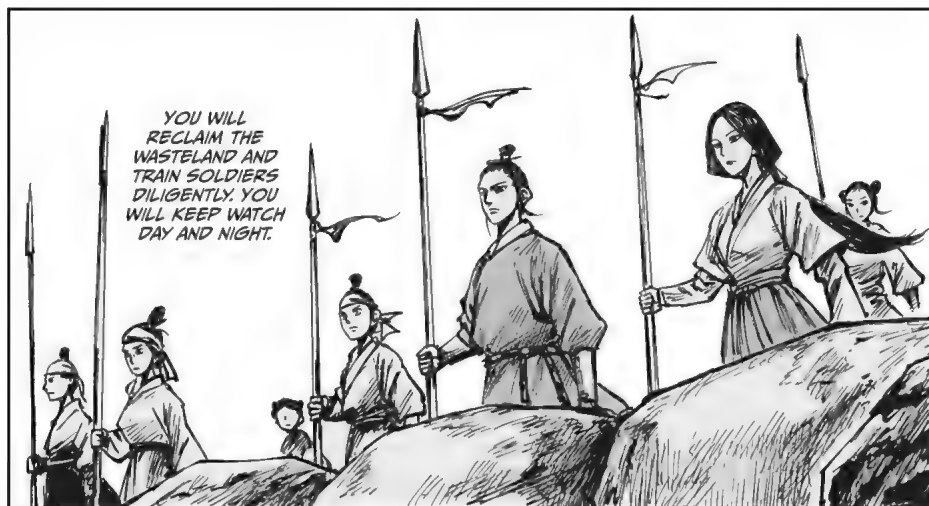




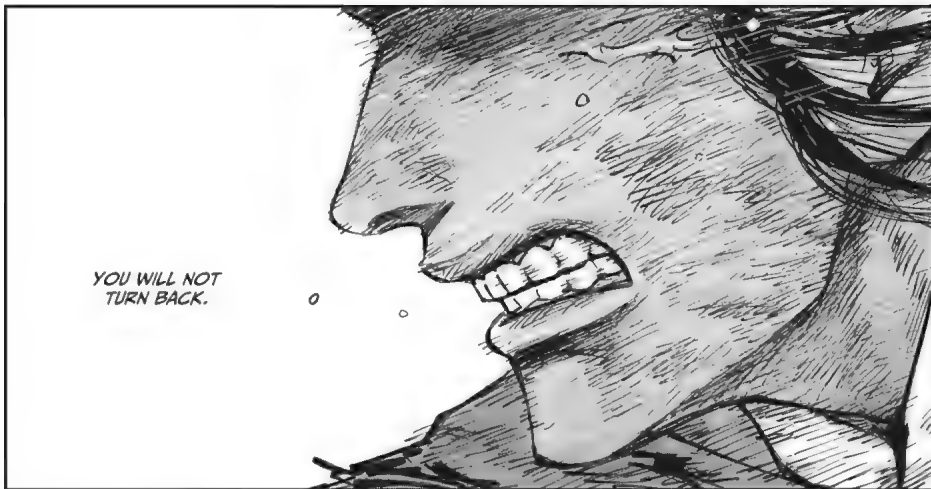


YOU JUST HOPE
THAT THEY CAN LIVE
AS HONEST AND
UPSTANDING PEOPLE.





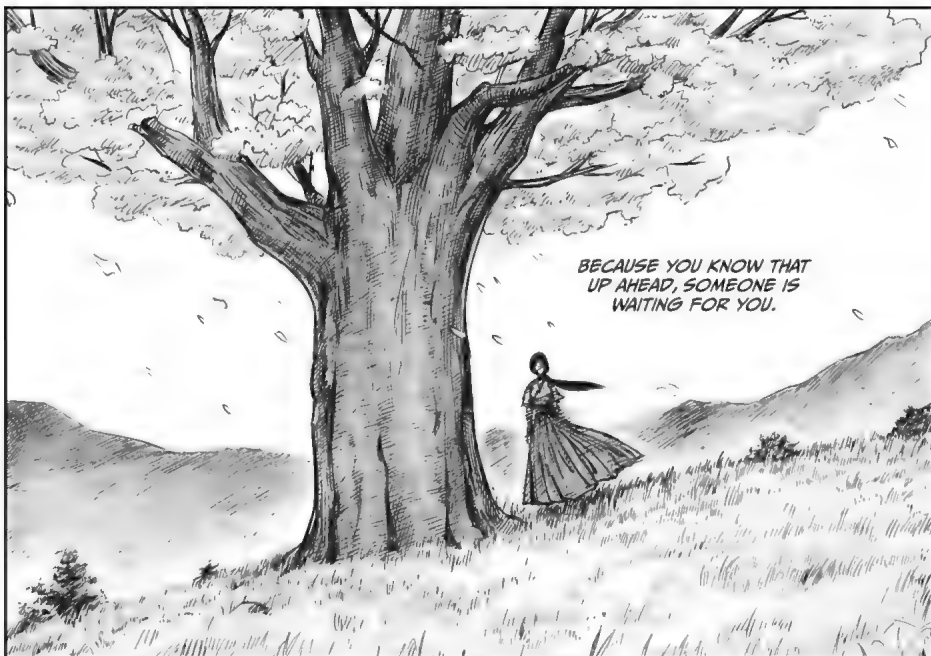




YOU WILL NOT
TURN BACK.



YOU'LL KEEP
RUNNING AND
-RUNNING...



BECAUSE YOU KNOW THAT
UP AHEAD, SOMEONE IS
WAITING FOR YOU.

A black and white illustration of a superhero character running through tall grass. The character is in a dynamic pose, leaning forward with one leg extended back and arms pumping. They are wearing a suit with a cape and a mask. The grass is tall and dark, with some blades catching the light. In the background, a large, bright full moon hangs in a dark, cloudy sky. The overall mood is dramatic and heroic.

THE MOONLIGHT
WILL ILLUMINATE
YOUR PATH.



THAT'S WHY YOU
STARTED TO
RUN, MOVING
FORWARD!



YOU HAD NO
OTHER CHOICE.



MOREOVER...



THE GRASS AND
TREES WILL HIDE
YOUR TRACKS...

THE DARKNESS
WILL MASK YOUR
SHADOW.



THE ROAD MAY
BE ROUGH...

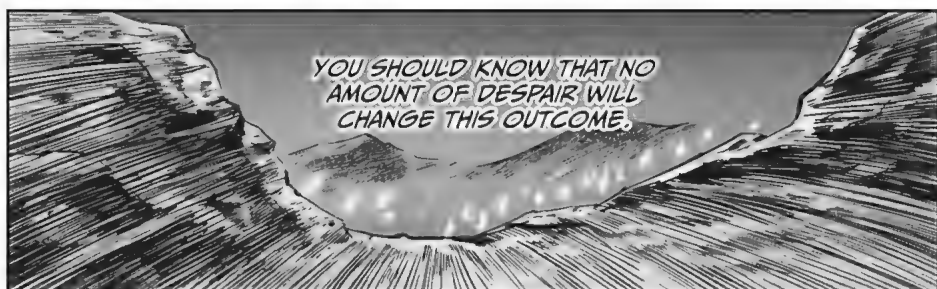
BUT YOU'LL SOON
THROW OFF THE
CALVARY'S PURSUIT...

BECAUSE THIS IS
YOUR HOME, YOU ARE
MORE FAMILIAR WITH
EVERY INCH OF THIS
LAND THAN THEY ARE.



MY CHILD...

THAT WAS THE
LAST TIME YOU
SAW ME.

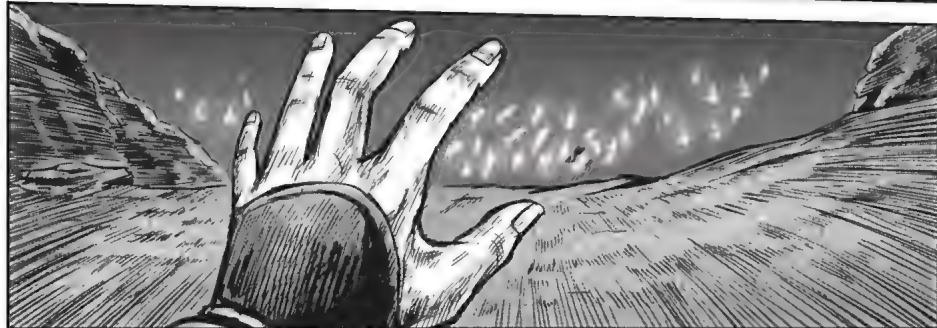
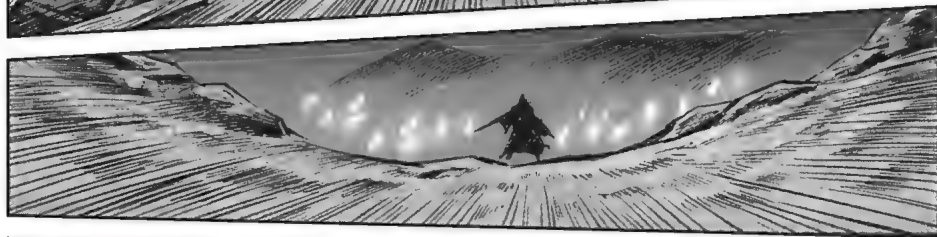


YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT NO
AMOUNT OF DESPAIR WILL
CHANGE THIS OUTCOME.



AFTER ALL,
YOU'RE
HELPLESS TO
SAVE ANYONE
RIGHT NOW.





*YOU CAN
BECOME...*

*ANYONE
YOU WISH
TO BE.*



BUT I'VE LIVED
HONESTLY.

I NEVER ACHIEVED
ANY GLORIOUS
ACCOMPLISHMENTS
IN THIS LIFE...



I HAVEN'T
DISGRACED MY
ANCESTORS...
THAT'S ENOUGH.



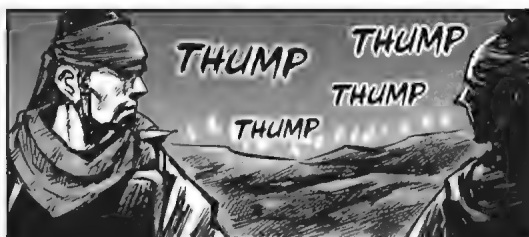
YOU STILL HAVE
A FUTURE.

BUT YOU'RE
DIFFERENT.



























THE LAST STAND OF JUSTICE:

CHAPTER XXXI



HOW
MANY
ARROWS
DO WE
HAVE
LEFT?



THREE.

TWELVE.



SEVEN.



I HAVE
FOUR.



FATHER,
WE HAVE A
TOTAL OF
TWENTY-
SIX.



HE PROCLAIMED
HIMSELF EMPEROR
XIONGWU OF DAYAN.





THE FIRST MONTH OF
THE FIFTEENTH YEAR OF
TIANBAO DURING THE
TANG DYNASTY (756 B.C.)

AN LUSHAN DECLARED
LUOYANG THE NEW CAPITAL
AND ASCENDED THE THRONE
AS THE EMPEROR.



WAS
VETERAN
GENERAL
GESHU HAN.

THE
SUCCESSOR
APPOINTED BY
THE COURT...



AND
CONTINUED
TO GUARD
TONGGUAN.



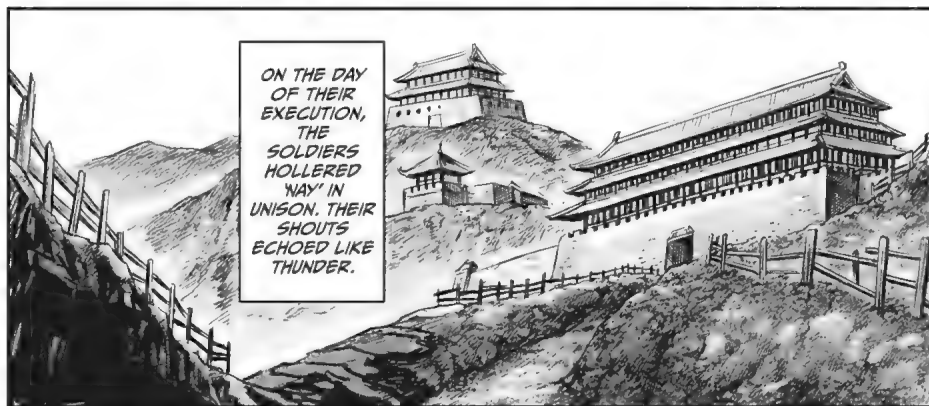
HE TOOK
OVER THE
200,000
TANG
SOLDIERS—

PARTIALLY
PARALYZED
BY A
STROKE...



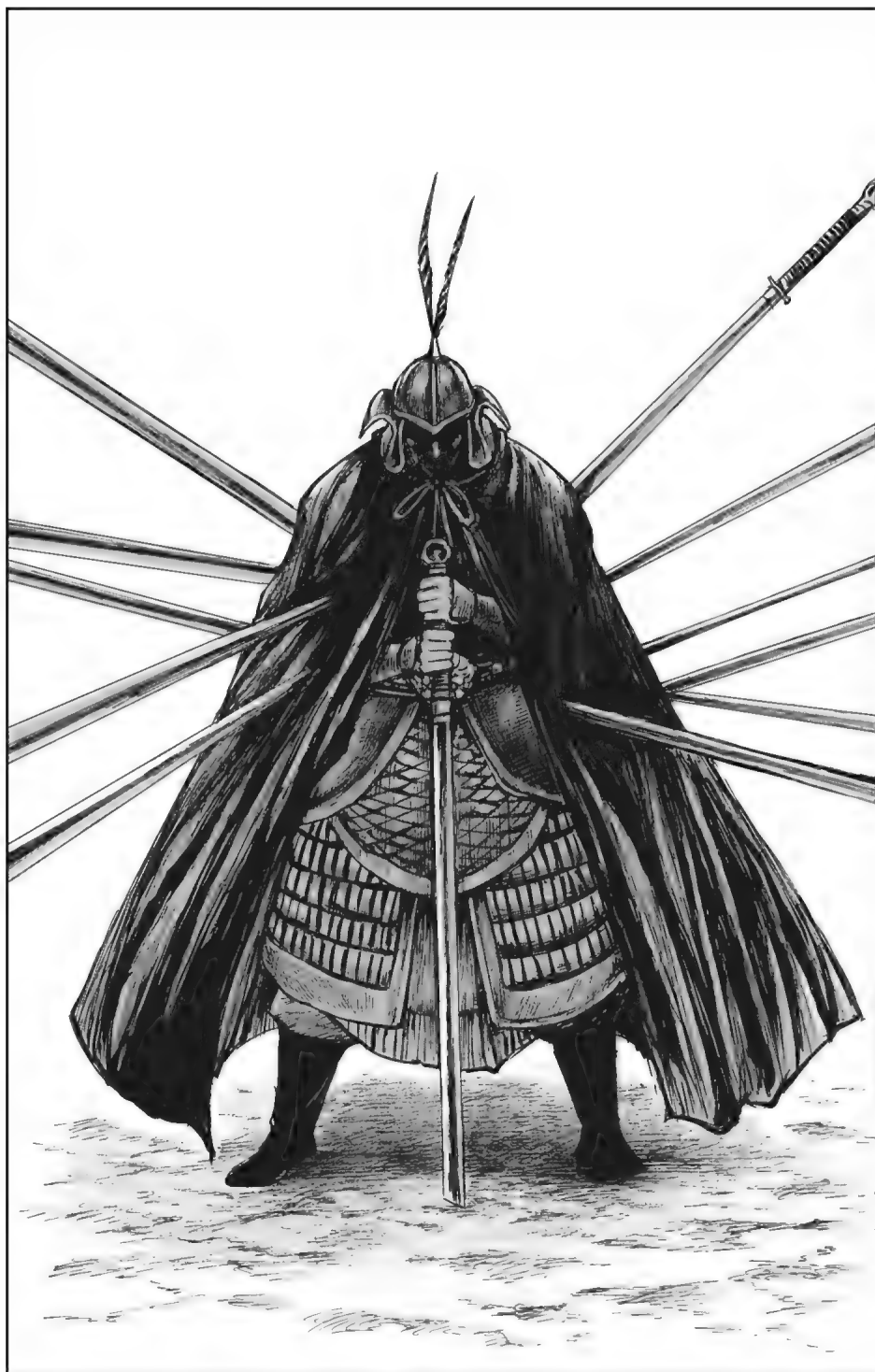
THE END OF THE
FOURTEENTH YEAR OF
TIANBAO (755 B.C.)

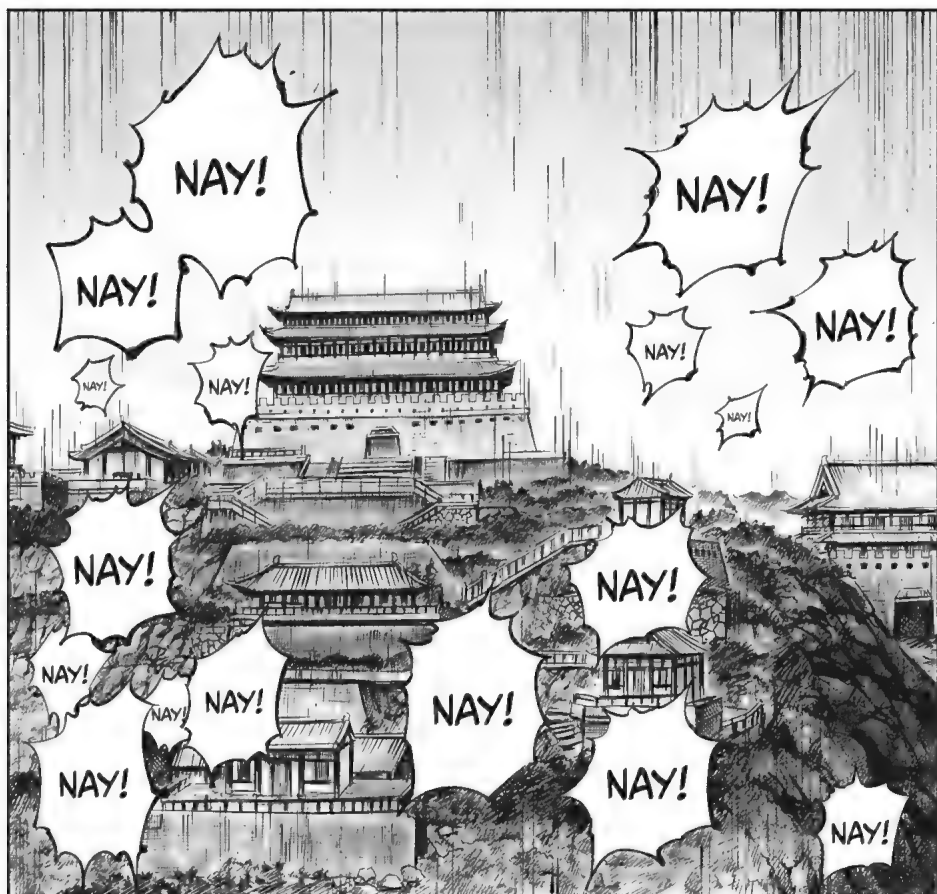
GAO XIANZHI AND FENG
CHANGQING WERE ORDERED
TO BE EXECUTED BY THE
IMPERIAL COURT.



ON THE DAY
OF THEIR
EXECUTION,
THE
SOLDIERS
HOLLERED
'WAY' IN
UNISON. THEIR
SHOUTS
ECHOED LIKE
THUNDER.



















IF YOU HARM
ME, YOU'RE
DEFYING THE
IMPERIAL
DECREE!

T-THESE
ARE THE
EMPEROR'S
ORDERS!



W-WHY
ARE YOU
LOOKING
AT ME LIKE
THAT?



WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?
D-DON'T
MOVE!



SHING



GAO
XIANZHI?!
ARE YOU
MAD?! PUT
DOWN YOUR
SWORD!



ARE YOU
TRYING
TO INCITE
YOUR
MEN TO
REBEL?

YOU WON'T
BE THE ONLY
ONE PUNISHED!
ALL OF YOUR
TROOPS AND
THEIR FAMILIES
WILL BE
EXECUTED!



IF I'M TO BE
EXECUTED FOR
IT, THEN SO
BE IT.

I ORDERED
THE SUDDEN
RETREAT OF OUR
TROOPS. THAT IS
MY CRIME.



THESE
ARE UTTER
LIES THAT
I WILL NOT
CONFESS
TO.

HOWEVER,
I'M BEING
ACCUSED OF
POCKETING
RATIONS
AND STOLEN
VALOR...



BUT
ONLY FOR
THE RIGHT
REASONS!

I'M
WILLING
TO DIE...

THE LAST STAND OF JUSTICE: CHAPTER XXX



MUST BE
FATE.

THAT WE
ARE DYING
TOGETHER
TODAY...







AFTER I DIE, I HOPE THAT YOUR MAJESTY WILL NOT DISREGARD THE WORDS OF THIS THIEF. I HOPE THAT PEACE WILL BE RESTORED TO THESE LANDS AND THE HU REBELS WILL BE DEFEATED – WITH THAT, MY EVERY WISH WILL BE FULFILLED.

I RAISE MY HEAD AND DOWN THIS POISON, SEALING THIS FINAL CHAPTER. AS A SUBJECT WHO DIES TO ADVISE HIS EMPEROR, EVEN BEYOND DEATH, MY GHOST WILL BE BOUND TO THIS DYNASTY.

IF THERE IS SOMETHING I WISH FOR IN ENDING MY LIFE, IT IS THE REPAYMENT OF MY DEEPEST GRATITUDE ON THE BATTLEFRONT. ON THE BATTLEFIELD, DRAW THE COMMANDER OUT TO THE FIGHT AND SLAY THIS TRAITOR WITH HASTE.

I AM ENDLESSLY GRATEFUL FOR THE FAVORS I HAVE BEEN GRANTED IN LIFE AND DEATH. WITH A HEAVY HEART, I, CHANGQING, BID A FINAL FAREWELL TO THIS ERA.



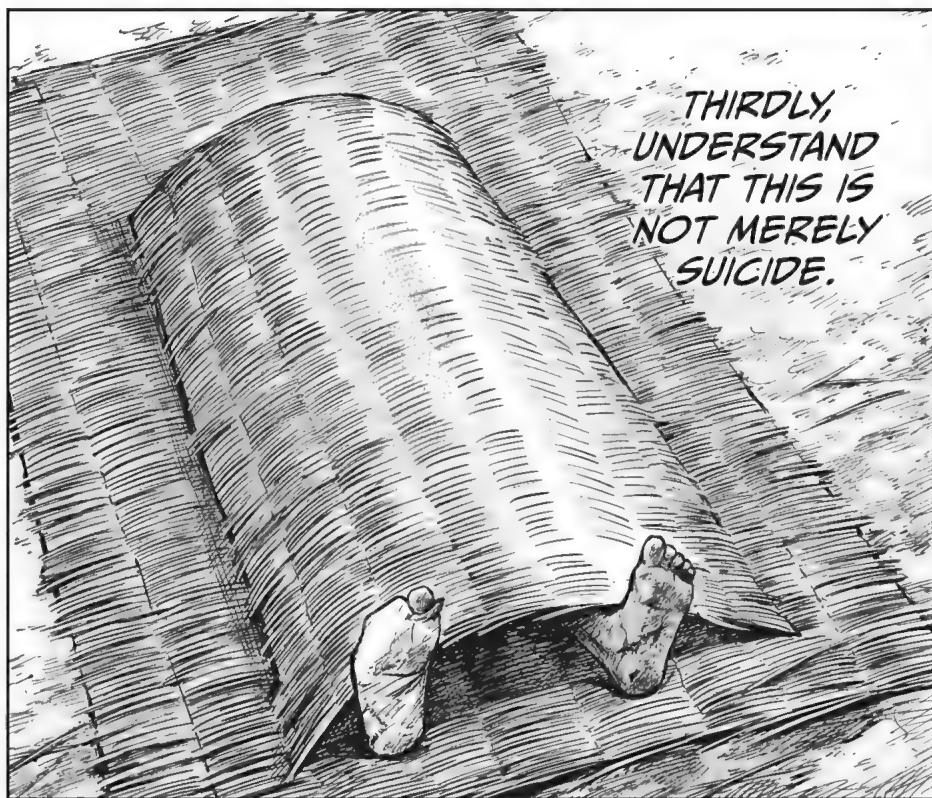
* 'FENG CHANGQING'S FINAL SUBMISSION BEFORE DEATH.' RECORDED IN THE OLD BOOK OF TANG, VOLUME 104, BIOGRAPHIES 54: FENG CHANGQING.



I AM ABOUT TO DIE.
YOUR MAJESTY MAY
THINK OF ME AS A
DECEITFUL AND RASH
GENERAL AFTER MY
MISCONDUCT.



YOUR MAJESTY
MAY THINK I'VE
TURNED FROM THE
COURT AND WISH
TO QUESTION MY
LOYALTY.



THIRDLY,
UNDERSTAND
THAT THIS IS
NOT MERELY
SUICIDE.



PLEASE
ALLOW ME
TO CONFIDE
IN YOU.







I WISH TO
STAND UNDER
THE BLADE AND
DIE A MARTYR
BEFORE MY
TROOPS...

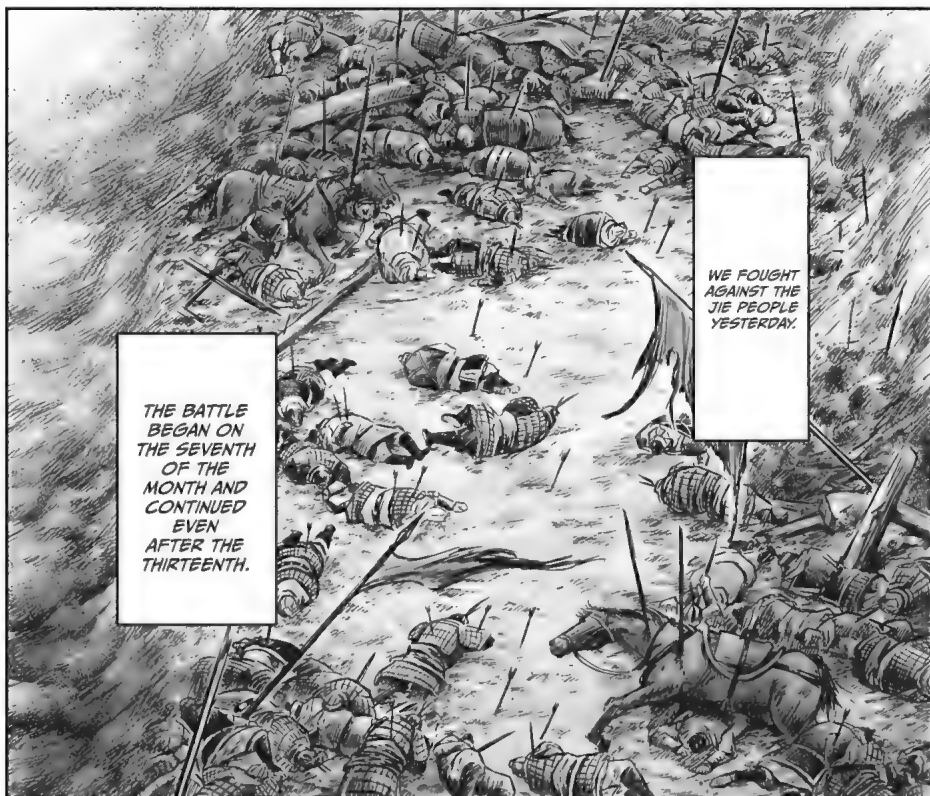
SO THAT THE
RESISTANCE
AGAINST THE
HU PERSISTS
AND THE
MIGHT OF
THEIR LEADER
WEAKENS.



TO REINFORCE
OUR DEFENCES,
I THEREFORE
OFFER MY
LIFE TO THE
HEAVENS.

BLOOD HAD
ALREADY SOAKED
THE FIELDS.





THE BATTLE
BEGAN ON
THE SEVENTH
OF THE
MONTH AND
CONTINUED
EVEN
AFTER THE
THIRTEENTH.

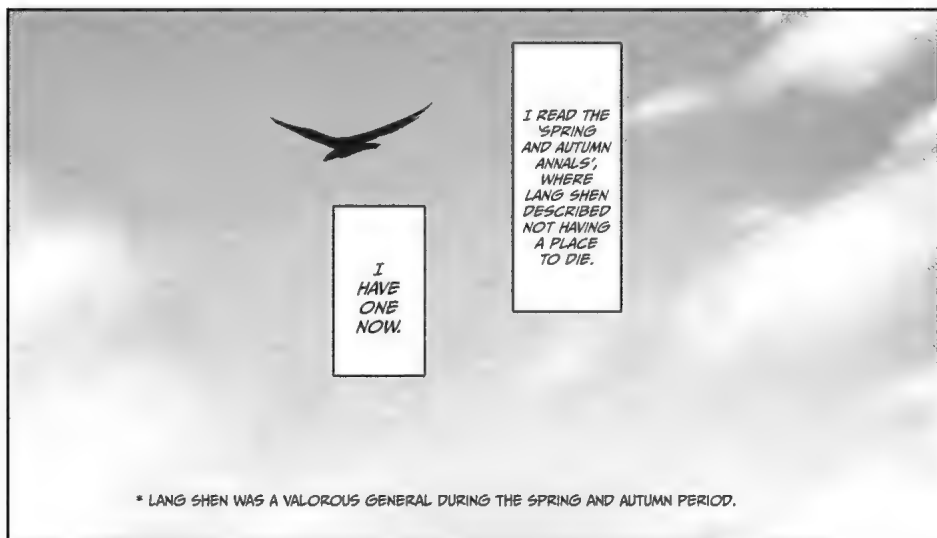
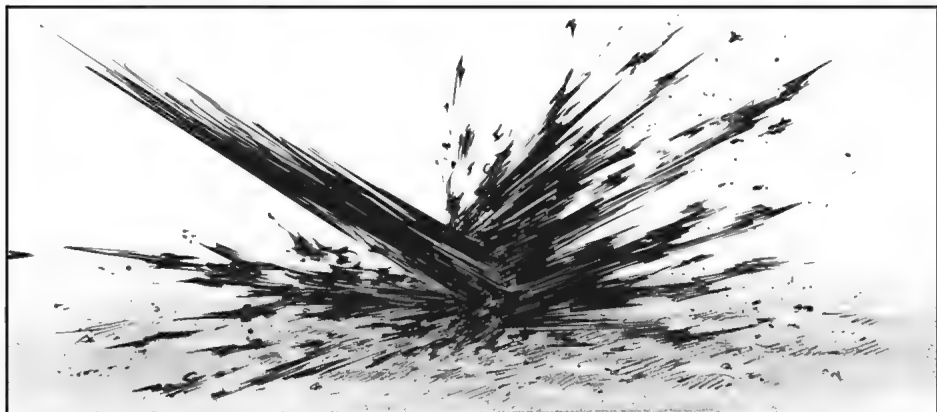
WE FOUGHT
AGAINST THE
JIE PEOPLE
YESTERDAY.



THE
TROOPS
UNDER MY
COMMAND
ARE ALL
HASTILY
RECRUITED,
UNTRAINED
MEN.



I LED CIVILIANS
FROM THE
SOUTHERN
CITIES TO FACE
THE ENEMY'S
ELITE CAVALRY
AT YUYANG, BUT
BEFORE WE
COULD ATTACK
THEIR POSITION...



I
HAVE
ONE
NOW.

I READ THE
"SPRING
AND AUTUMN
ANNALS",
WHERE
LANG SHEN
DESCRIBED
NOT HAVING
A PLACE
TO DIE.

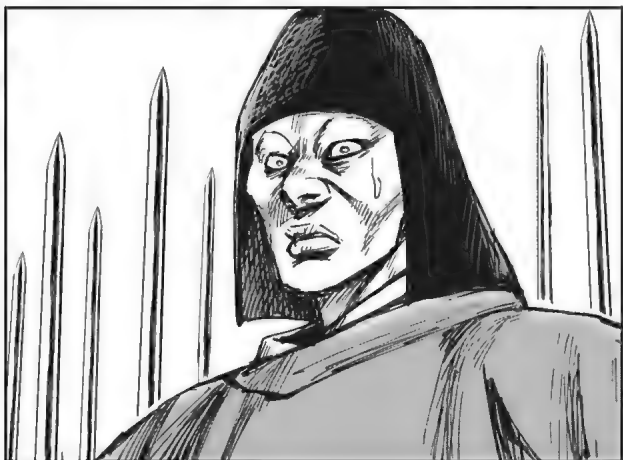
* LANG SHEN WAS A VALOROUS GENERAL DURING THE SPRING AND AUTUMN PERIOD.



ALAS,
CHANG'AN IS
UNEXPECTEDLY
FAR AWAY, AND
I AM UNABLE TO
VISIT.

HANGU PASS IS
TOO REMOTE,
AND I CANNOT
FREE MYSELF
OF MY DUTIES.







THIS TIME, I
WRITE NOT TO
PLEAD FOR MY
LIFE BUT TO
REPORT MY
STRATEGIES
TO RESTORE
PEACE TO
OUR COUNTRY
AND FOIL THE
SCHEMES OF
THE WICKED.



WHEN IT
COMES
TO THE HU
REBELS'
MILITARY
MIGHT,
SEEK MORE
INTELLIGENCE,
IN CASE
OF OTHER
DESIGNS.

I HOPE,
WITH GREAT
RESPECT TO
THE IMPERIAL
COURT, TO
BESEECH
YOUR
MAJESTY:



THE NEWS
MADE MY
HEART
SOAR, AND I
COULD ONLY
KOWTOW IN
GRATITUDE.



EVER SINCE
THE
FORTRESS
FELL, I SENT
MESSENGERS
THRICE TO
CONVEY
MY TRUE
THOUGHTS...



ALWAYS
FORTHRIGHT
UNDER
IMPERIAL
INTERRO-
GATION.



I WAS A
CONVICT
TO BE
EXECUTED,
YET I WAS
SUDDENLY
SPARED.

AND
ORDERED TO
RETURN TO
SHANZHOU
TO JOIN GAO
XIANZHI'S
CAMPAIGN.



AS A
DEFEATED
GENERAL,
I WAS
DESERVING
OF SEVERE
PUNISHMENT.









FENG
CHANGQING.

WHERE DO
YOU THINK
YOU'RE
RUNNING
OFF TO?

THE LAST STAND OF JUSTICE:
CHAPTER XXIX



LI E, YAN
GAOQING, AND
HIS SON ARE
COUNTING ON
OUR REIN-
FORCEMENTS!

EVEN IF IT'S
A MILITARY
CRIME, I WILL
KEEP MY
PROMISE!





STUPID
BASTARD!

WHAT THE
HELL IS
WANG
CHENGYE
DOING?



WE NEED TO
MOBILIZE
THE TROOPS
TO CROSS
THE RIVER
AND ASSIST
CHANGSHAN,
NOW!

REPORT THIS
TO COMMANDER
GAO XIANZHI AT
ONCE!



BUT GENERAL
FENG,
YOU'VE BEEN
STRIPPED OF
YOUR TITLE...
YOU'RE JUST
AN UNRANKED
SOLDIER!



I'LL
LEAD
THE
ARMY!

THIS IS AN
EMERGENCY!
GATHER AS
MANY MEN AS
YOU CAN!



GENERAL WANG CHENGYE HASN'T SENT REINFORCEMENTS!

AN LUSHAN HAS ORDERED SHI SIMING TO BESIEGE CHANGSHAN.



TONG-GUAN

GENERAL FENG! URGENT REPORT!



YAN GAOQING IS DESPERATELY DEFENDING TO THE VERY END WITH HIS TROOPS! CHANGSHAN IS IN GRAVE DANGER!

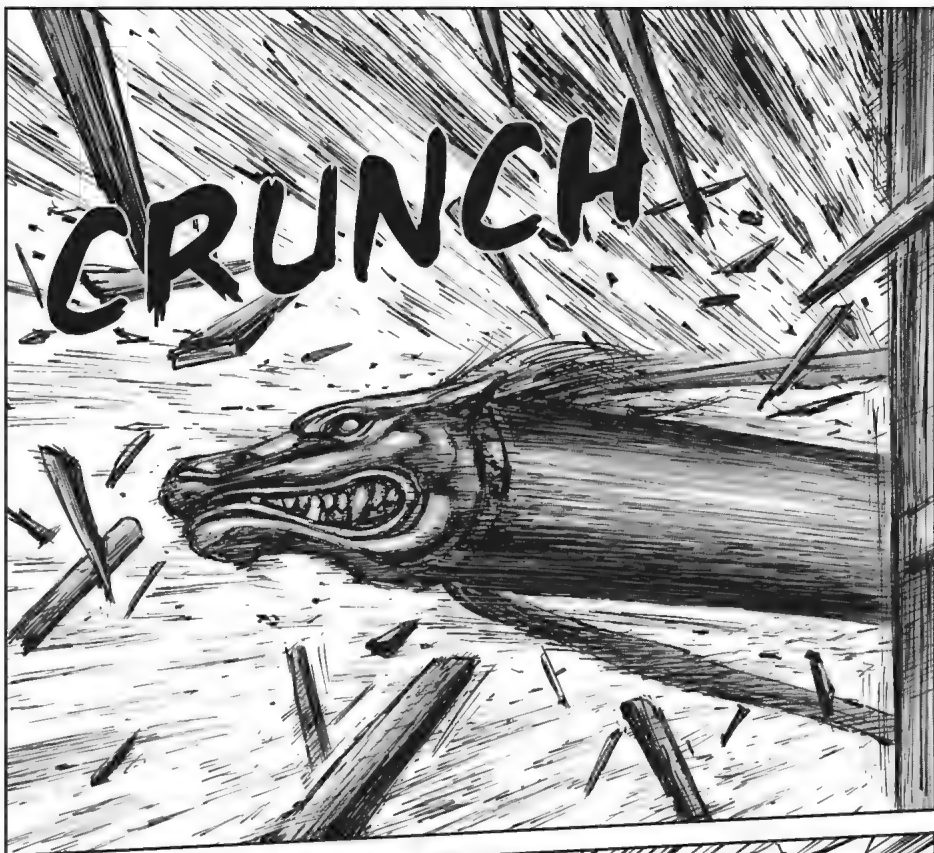
ACCORDING TO REPORTS, GENERAL WANG CHENGYE IS HEADED TO CHANG'AN!

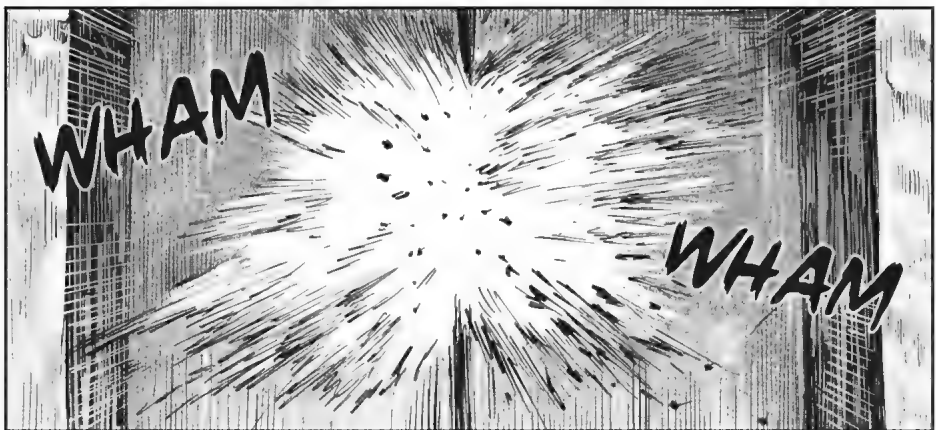
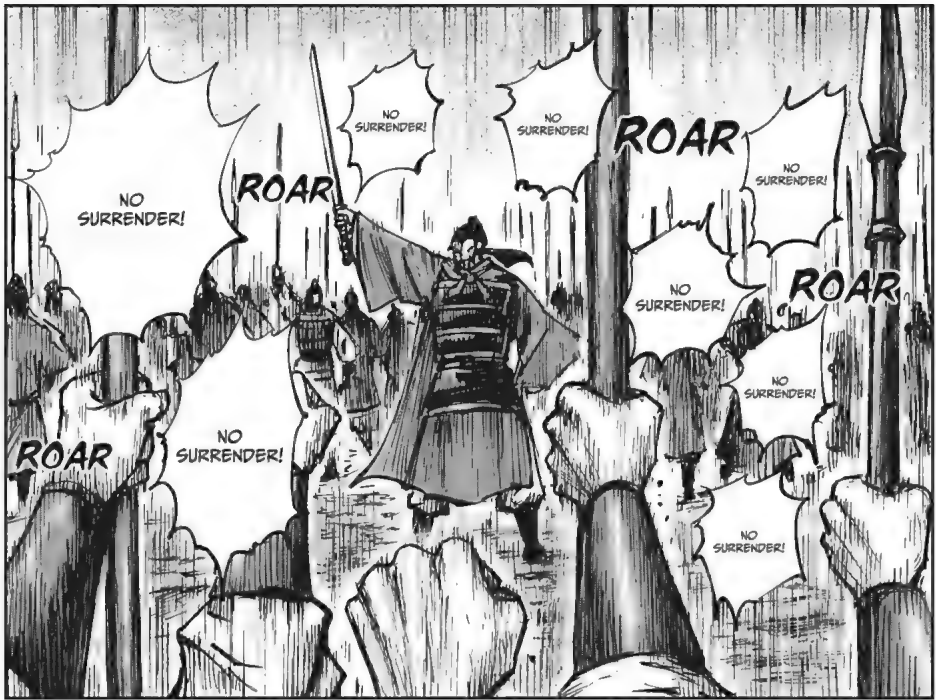


WHAT?











NO
SURRENDER!



NO
SURRENDER!

NO
SURRENDER!









IS OUR
UNYIELDING
RESOLVE.

WHAT WE
LEAVE
BEHIND...



PERHAPS
THE IMPERIAL
COURT AND THE
WORLD WILL BE
IGNORANT OF
OUR ENCOUNTER
HERE.



PERHAPS THE
REINFORCEMENTS
HAVE BEEN
DELAYED.



IF WE
SURRENDER,
THEY WILL
RECORD OUR
HUMILIATION.



IF WE BACK
DOWN, THEY
WILL THINK US
COWARDS.



HOWEVER,
IF AT THIS
VERY
MOMENT...

WE STAND
FIRM AGAINST
A FORMIDABLE
ENEMY TO THE
LAST...



TILL OUR VERY
LAST ARROW,
OUR VERY
LAST DROP OF
BLOOD, OUR
VERY LAST
BREATH...



NEITHER A
LIFE WITHOUT
PURPOSE NOR
A LIFE OF
PLUNDER CAN
LAST BEYOND
A HUNDRED
YEARS.

IN TIMES OF
TURMOIL...



ALL OF US
WILL DIE
SOMEDAY.



TO
REMEMBER
US IN THIS
PRESENT
MOMENT?

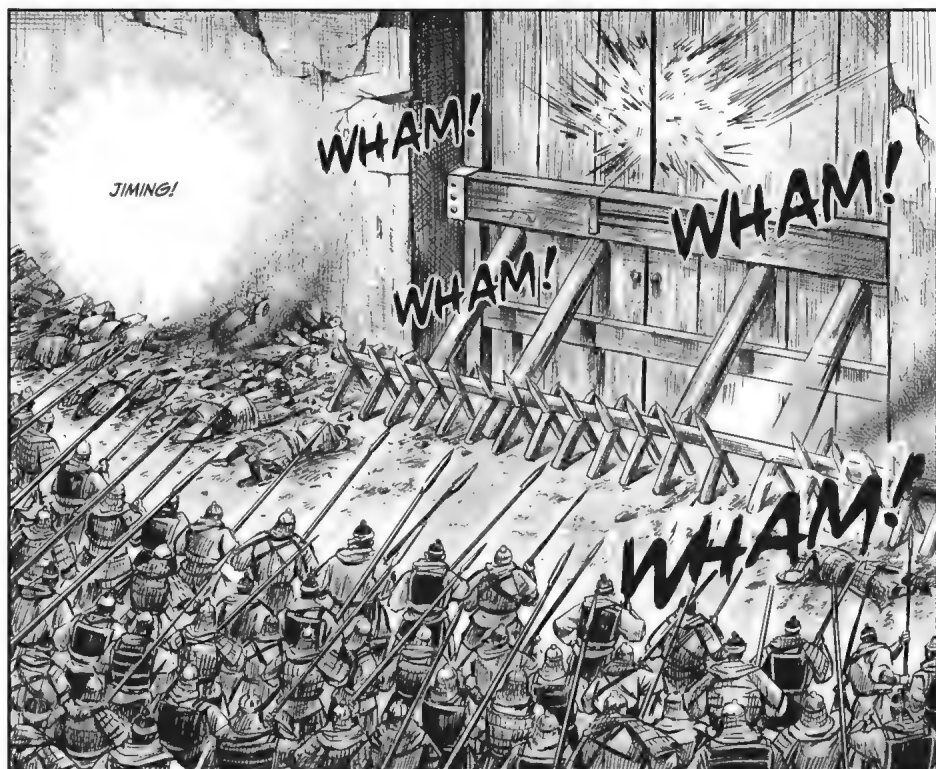
HOW DO
YOU WANT
THE PEOPLE
A THOUSAND
YEARS FROM
NOW...

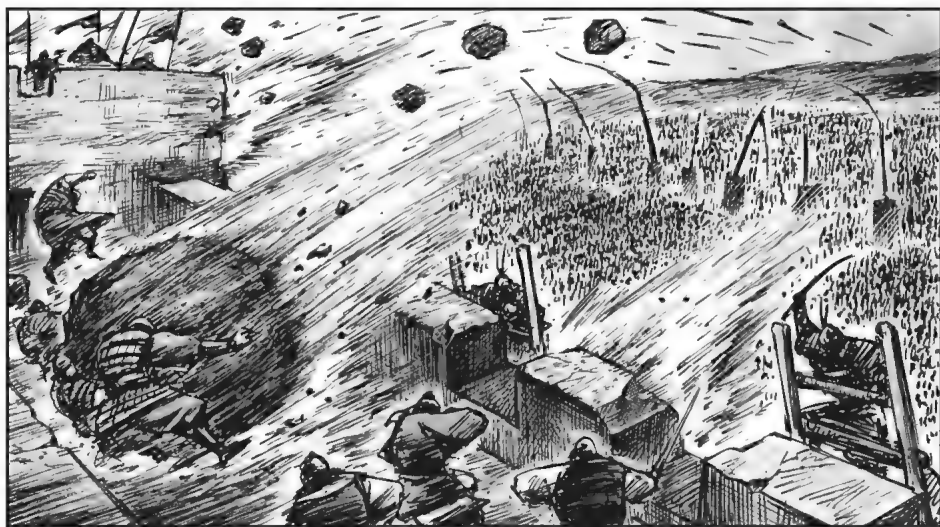






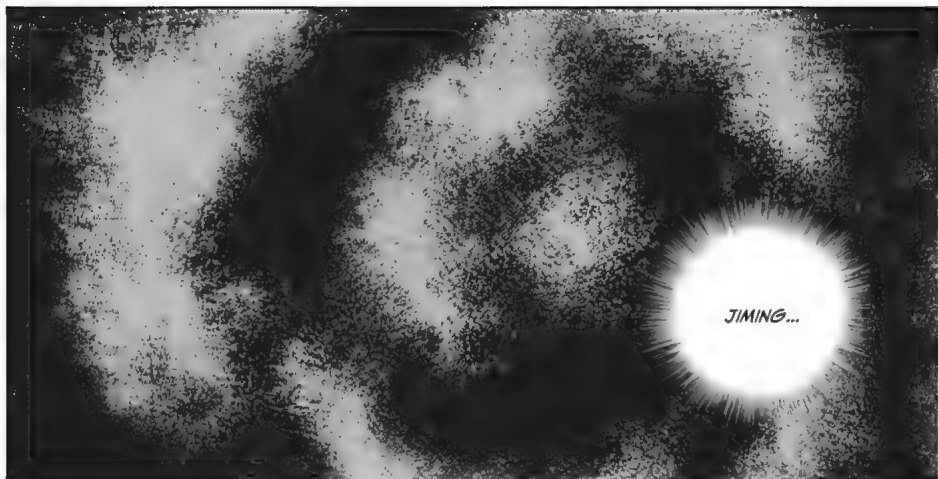








THE LAST STAND OF JUSTICE:
CHAPTER XXVIII



JIMING...



WE'LL
PUNISH HIM
PUBLICLY
ACCORDING
TO THE LAW.

WHEN I'M
BACK...



THE GOLDEN
TURTLES...

YULIN, WANG
CHENGYE...

THE PRIME
MINISTER...
YANG
GUOZHONG...



THE GOLDEN
TURTLES...

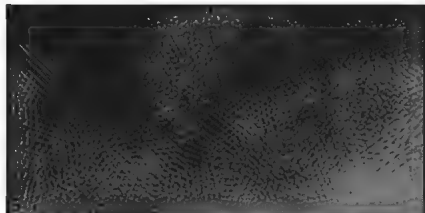


THE GOLDEN
TURTLES...



YANG
GUOZHONG...

AN LUSHAN...







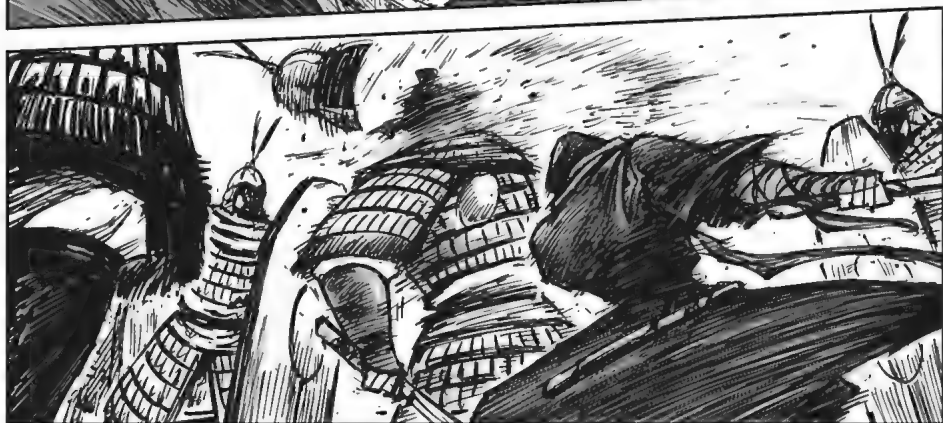


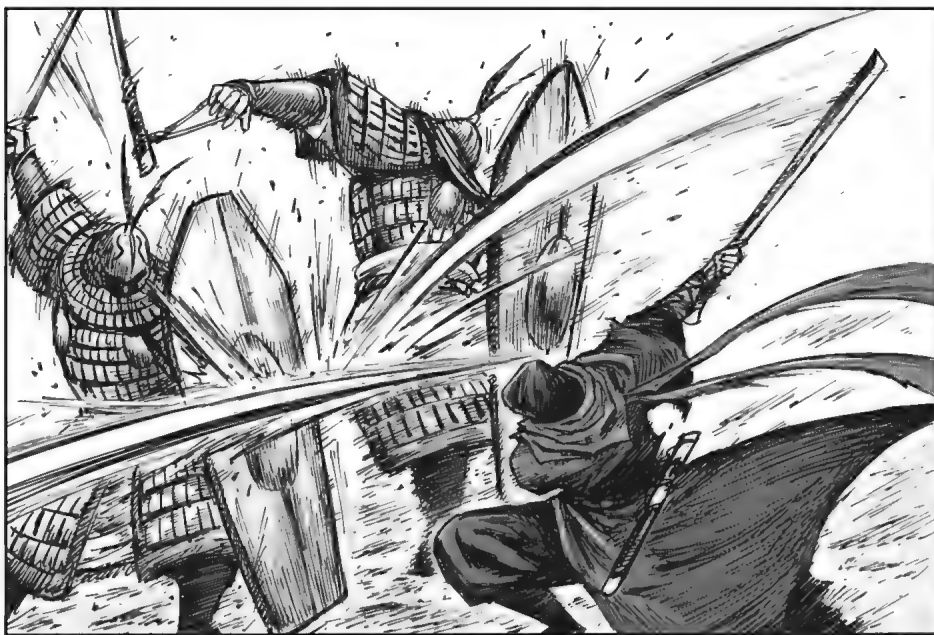






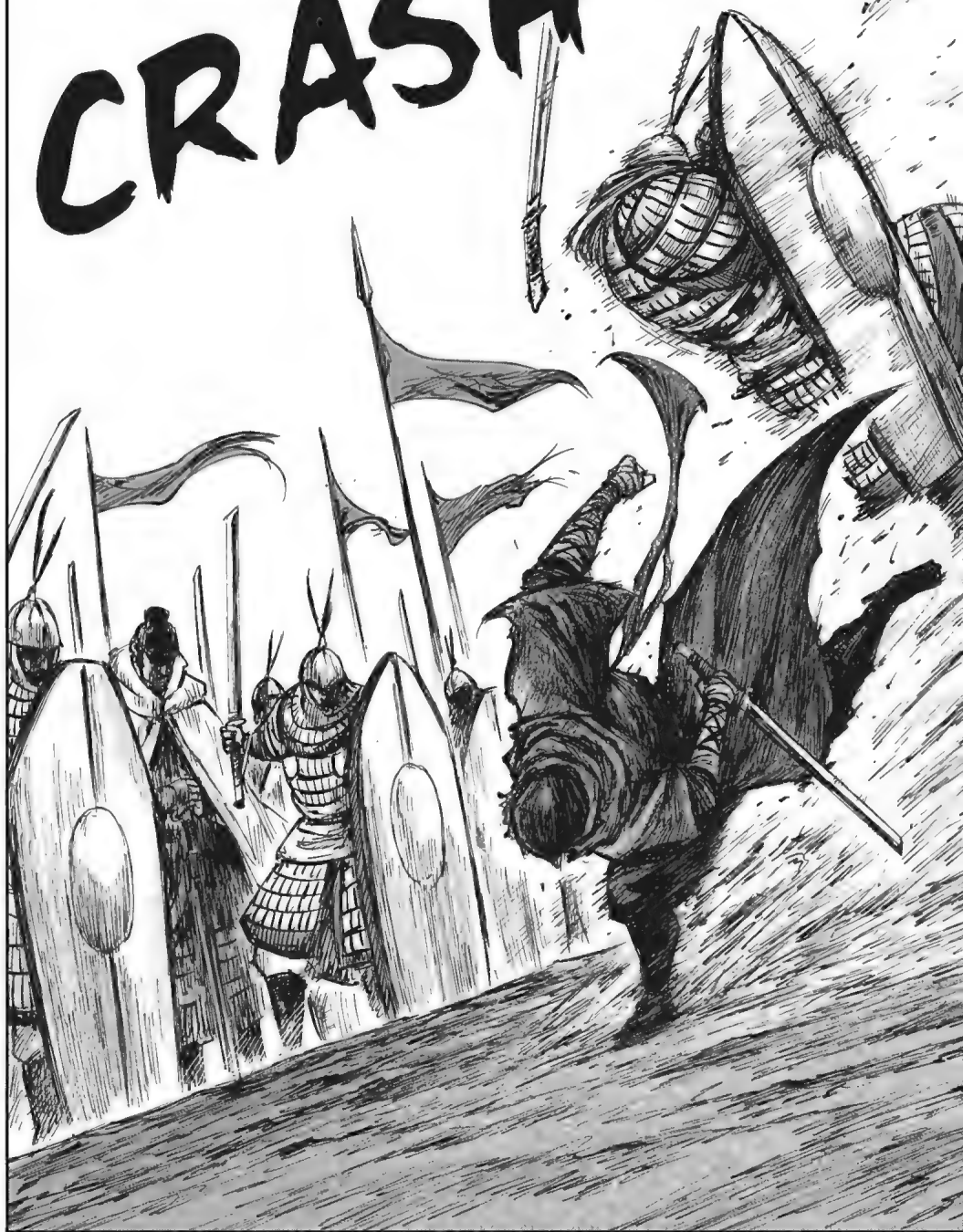








CRASH





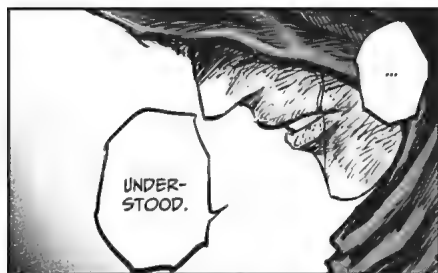


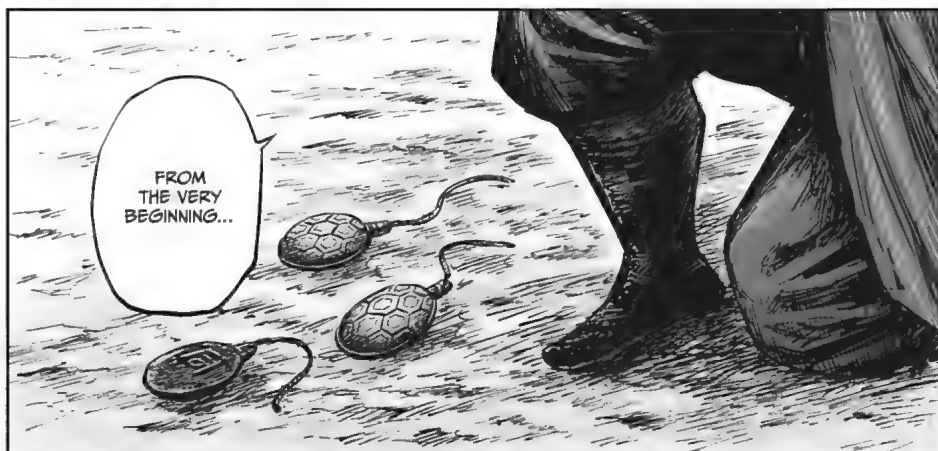


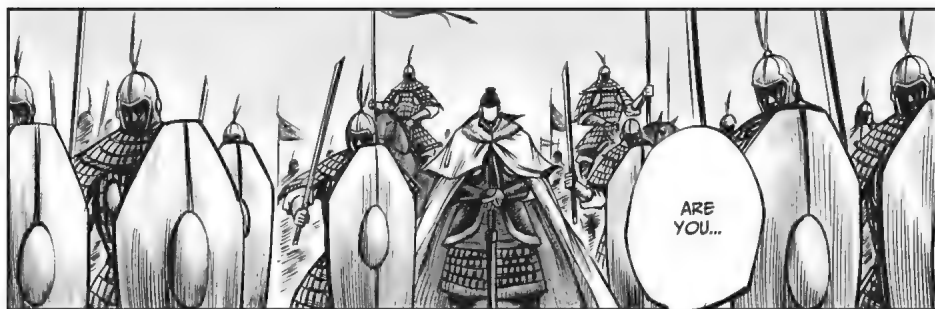


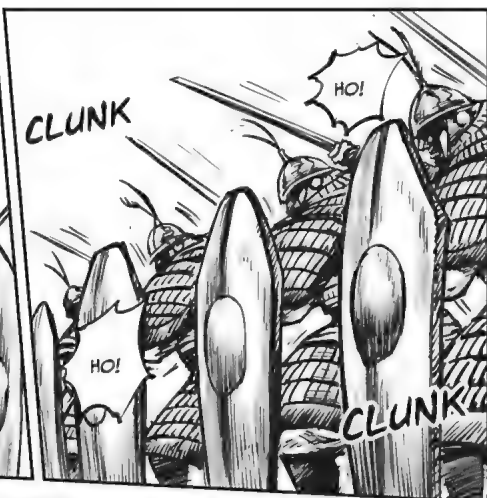
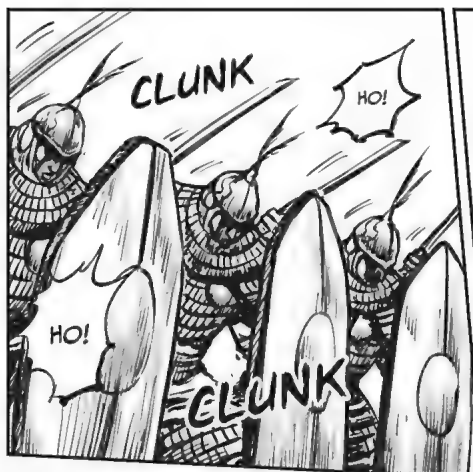


I'LL TAKE
YOU WITH ME
TO HELL THEN.

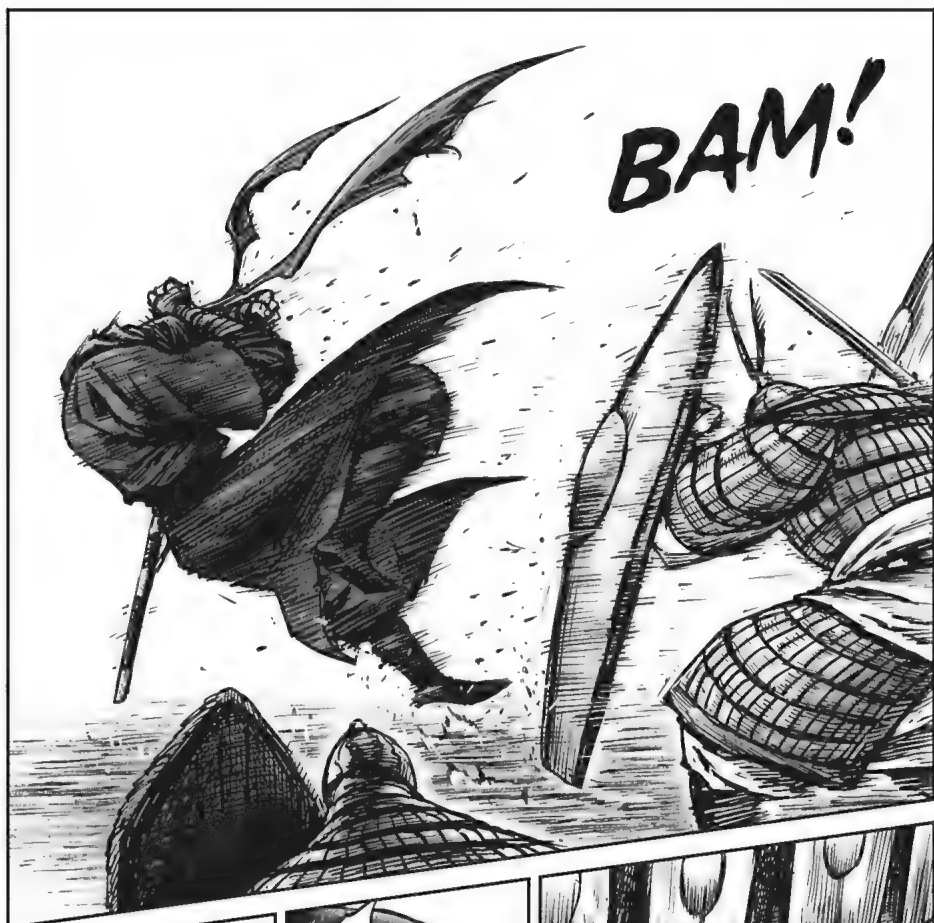


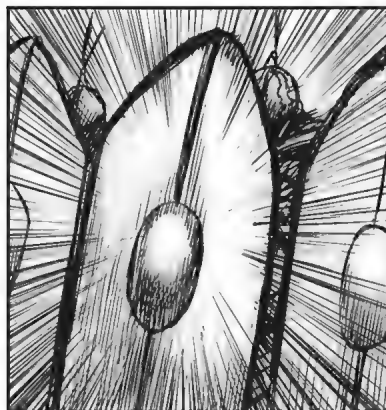
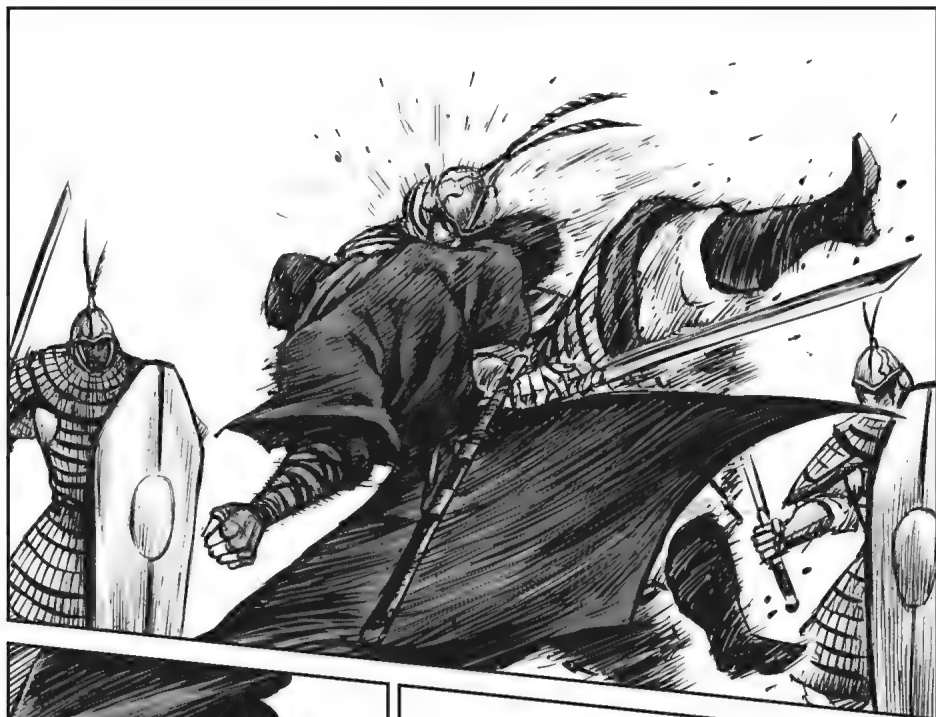


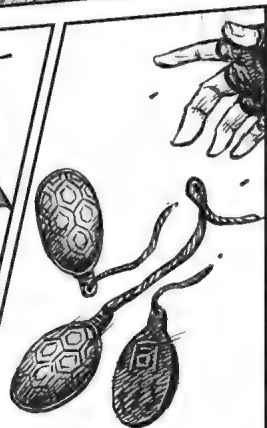












THE LAST STAND OF JUSTICE:

CHAPTER XXVII





ASSASSIN'S
CREED
DYNASTY









I HAVE
COME IN SECRET
TO REQUEST
REINFORCEMENTS
FOR CHANGSHAN!

I'M LI E, EX-
SOLDIER OF
GENERAL GAO
XIANZHI!



AS PROMISED, HERE
IS MY PROOF: THE
TOKENS OF THE
THREE TRAITOROUS
GENERALS!











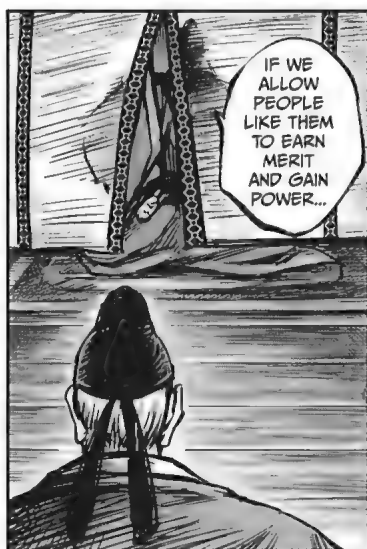


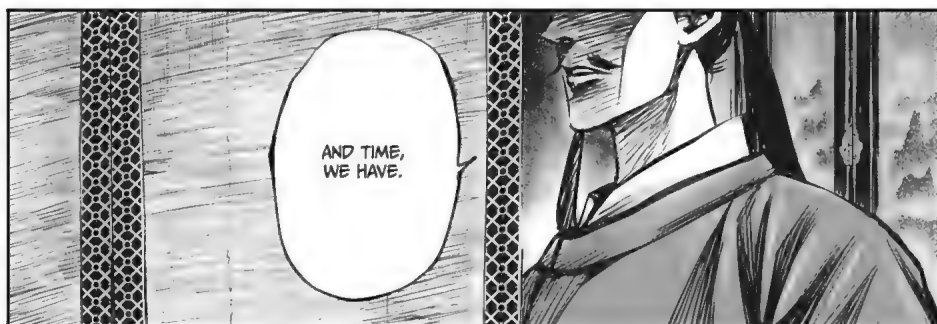




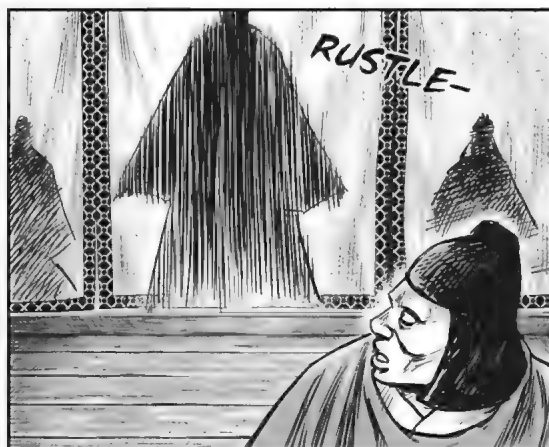
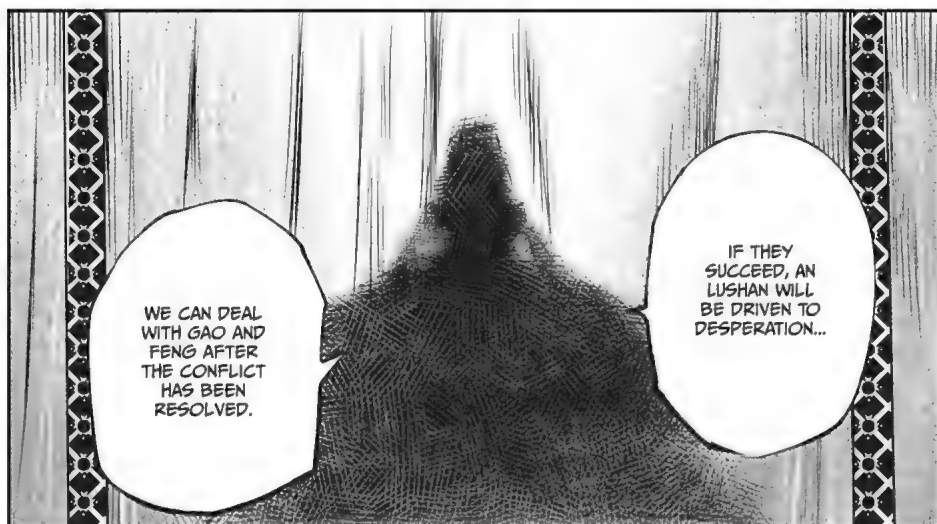
WHEN THE
REBELLION
HAS BEEN
EXTINGUISHED...

THE LIVES
OF EVERYONE
IN THE GOLDEN
TURTLES WILL BE
THREATENED.













HE EVEN
DISTRIBUTED
ALL THE
RATIONS
TO THE
SOLDIERS.

I HEARD
THAT GAO
XIANZHI OPENED
THE TAIYUAN
STORES OF HIS
OWN ACCORD
DURING HIS
RETIRED FROM
SHAN COUNTY.



WHAT
IS GAO
XIANZHI
GUILTY
OF?

LET
ME
ASK
AGAIN.



H-HE DID.



VERY
GOOD.

IN ADDITION,
HE STOLE
MILITARY RATIONS
AND ENRICHED
HIMSELF WHILE
THE KINGDOM
WAS IN CRISIS...
LIKE FENG
CHANGQING,
HE SHOULD
BE PUBLICLY
BEHEADED!

AS THE DEPUTY
COMMANDER OF
THE MILITARY, HE
ABANDONED THE
TERRITORY OF
SHAN.

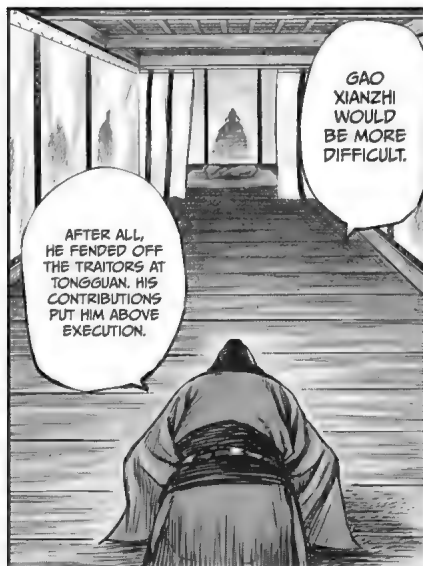


SOMEONE
MUST BE HELD
RESPONSIBLE.

HIS MAJESTY
IS ALREADY
FURIOUS THAT
THE IMPERIAL
ARMY LOST
LUOYANG...



BIAN
LINGCHENG,
WHO WOULD
YOU SAY IS
AN IDEAL
SCAPEGOAT?



AFTER ALL,
HE FENDED OFF
THE TRAITORS AT
TONGGUAN. HIS
CONTRIBUTIONS
PUT HIM ABOVE
EXECUTION.

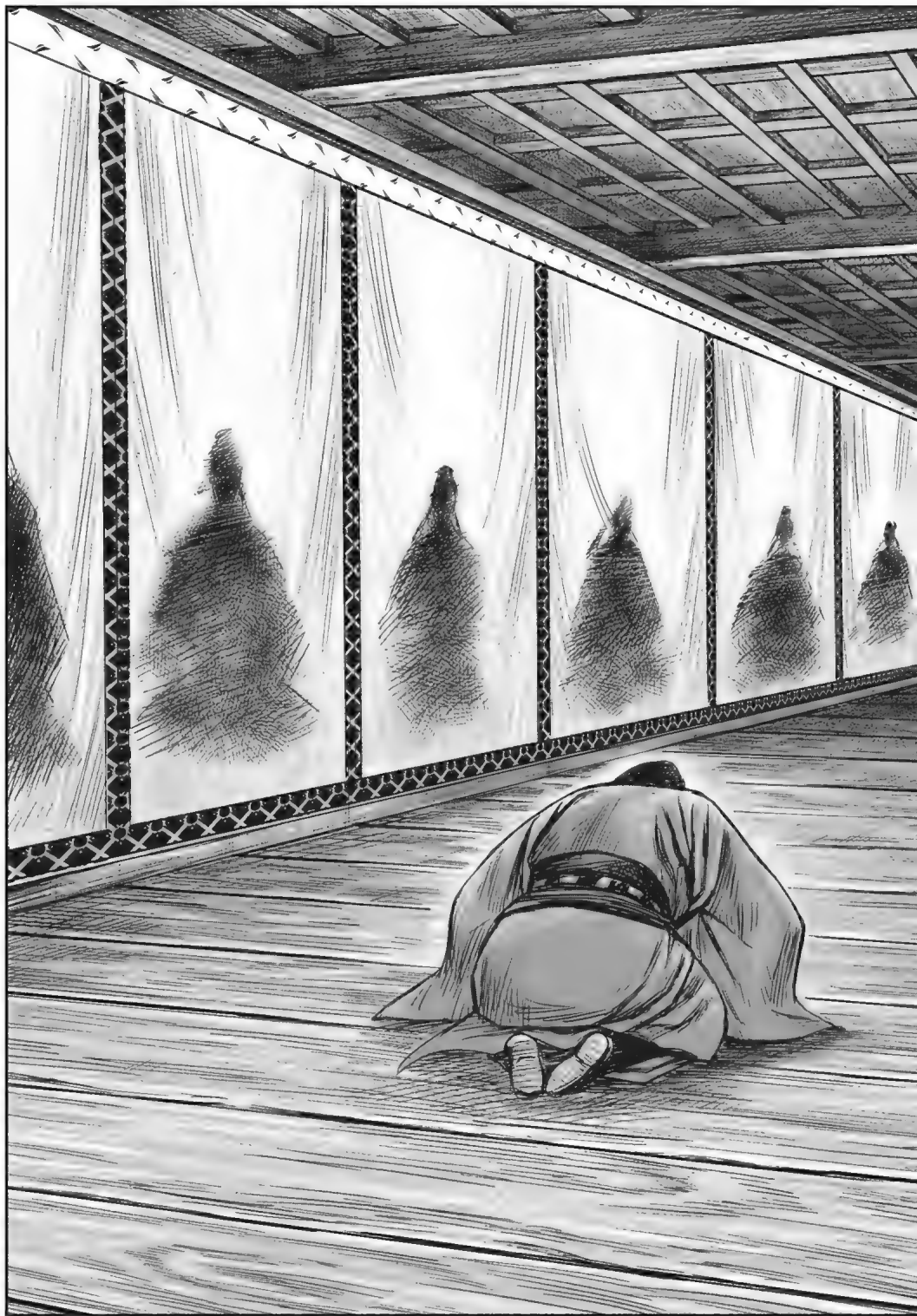
GAO
XIANZHI
WOULD BE MORE
DIFFICULT.



FENG
CHANGQING
IS A
DEFEATED
GENERAL.

IT'S EASY TO
MAKE HIM THE
SCAPEGOAT...

HE CAN BE
FRAMED FOR
COLLUDING
WITH EXTERNAL
FORCES AND
SWAYING THE
MILITARY SPIRIT.
HE SHOULD BE
EXECUTED.



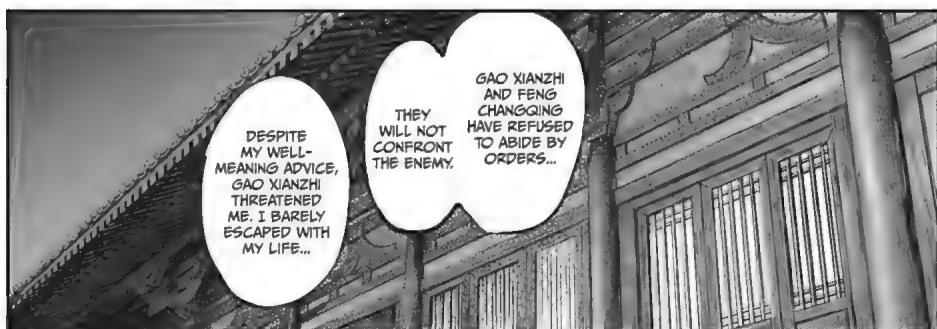


THE LAST STAND OF JUSTICE:
CHAPTER XXVI



SOMEWHERE IN
CHANG'AN

BIAN
LINGCHENG
REPORTING
WITH
IMPORTANT
NEWS.



DESPITE
MY WELL-
MEANING ADVICE,
GAO XIANZHI
THREATENED
ME. I BARELY
ESCAPED WITH
MY LIFE...

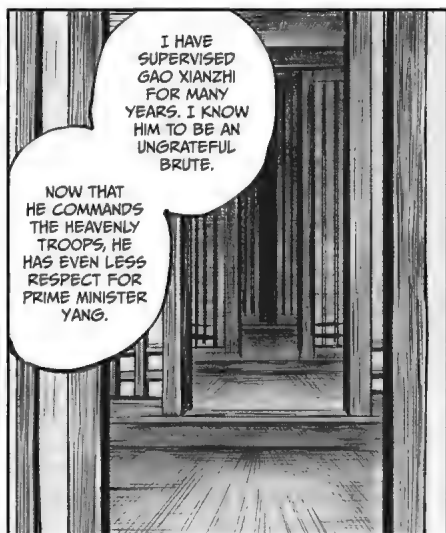
THEY
WILL NOT
CONFRONT
THE ENEMY.

GAO XIANZHI
AND FENG
CHANGQING
HAVE REFUSED
TO ABIDE BY
ORDERS...



WHAT
SHOULD
WE DO
WITH
GAO AND
FENG?

I SEEK
YOUR
VENERATED
ADVICE.



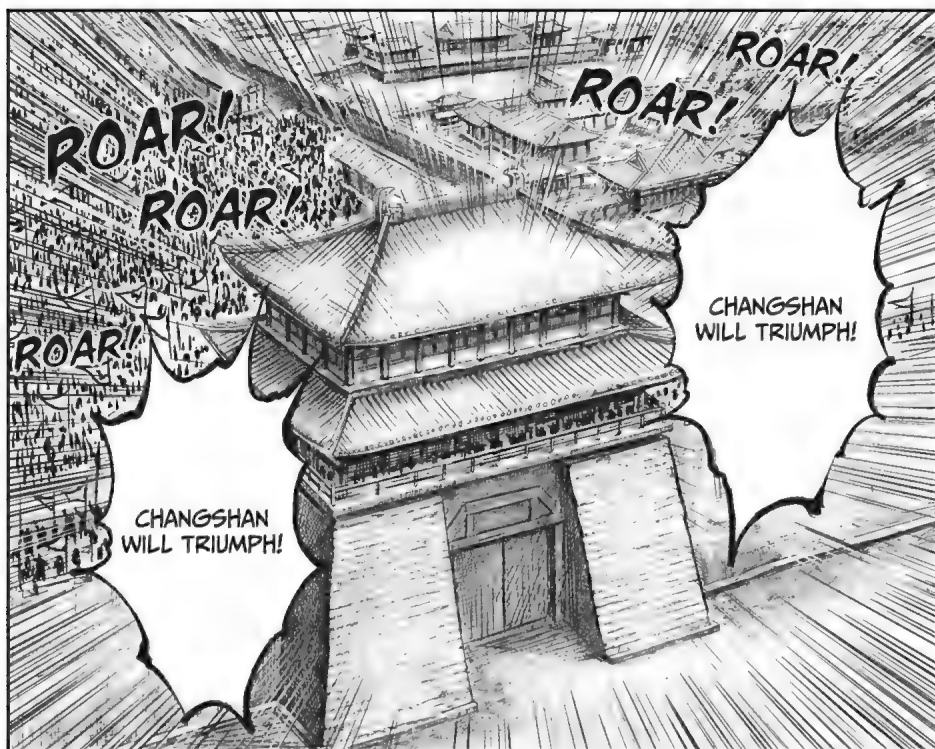
I HAVE
SUPERVISED
GAO XIANZHI
FOR MANY
YEARS. I KNOW
HIM TO BE AN
UNGRATEFUL
BRUTE.

NOW THAT
HE COMMANDS
THE HEAVENLY
TROOPS, HE
HAS EVEN LESS
RESPECT FOR
PRIME MINISTER
YANG.



NORTHERN
CAPITAL OF
THE TANG

TAIYUAN
PREFECTURE







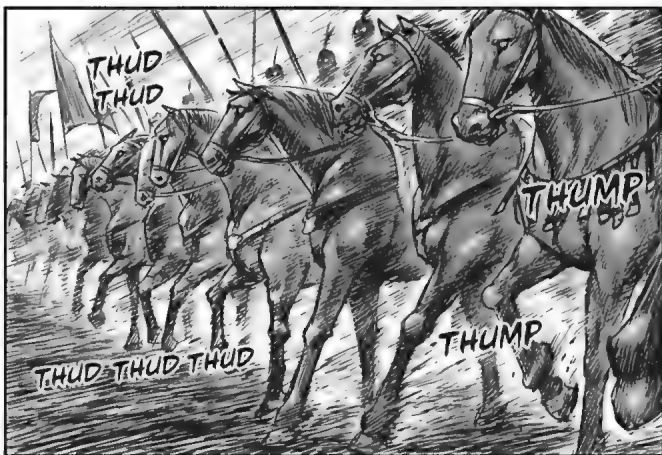


BEFORE THE
TRAITORS ATTACK
CHANGSHAN...

I MUST LEAD THE
REINFORCEMENTS...

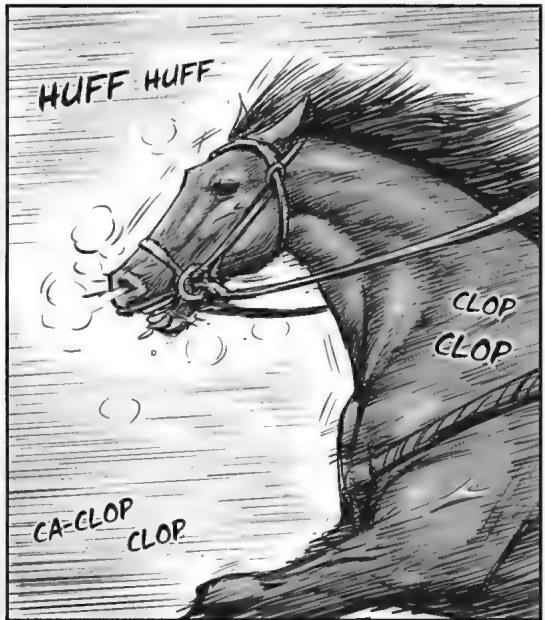
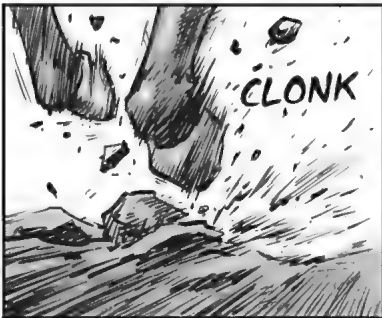
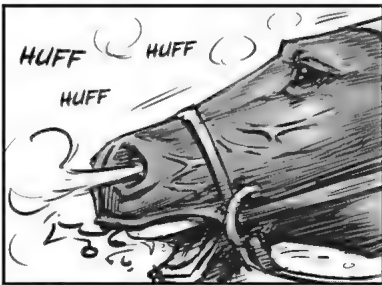
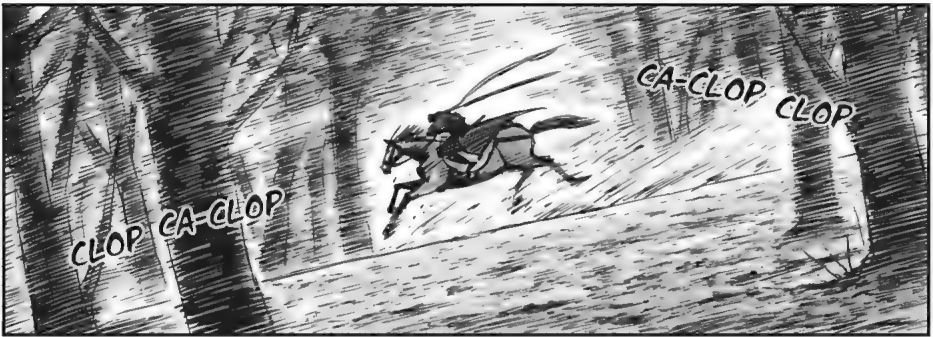
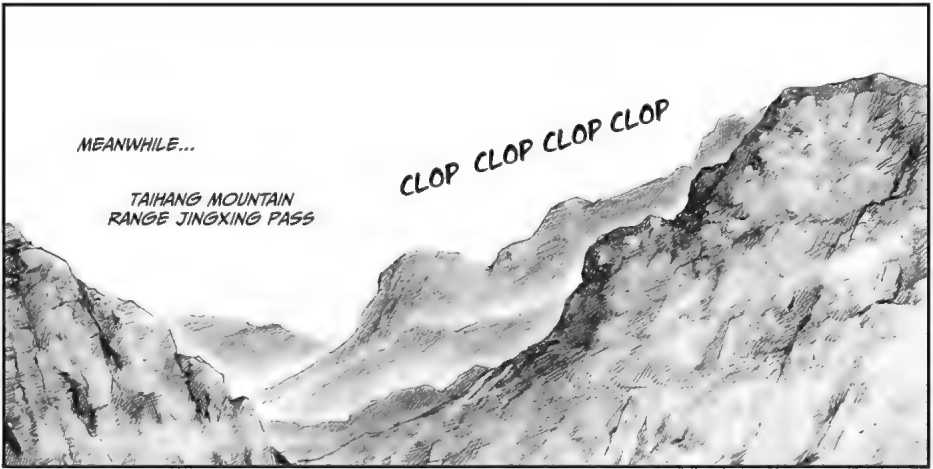


AND GET
THERE FIRST.















AS FOR YAN
GAOQING AND
HIS FAMILY...



GIVE THEM
ONE LAST
CHANCE.

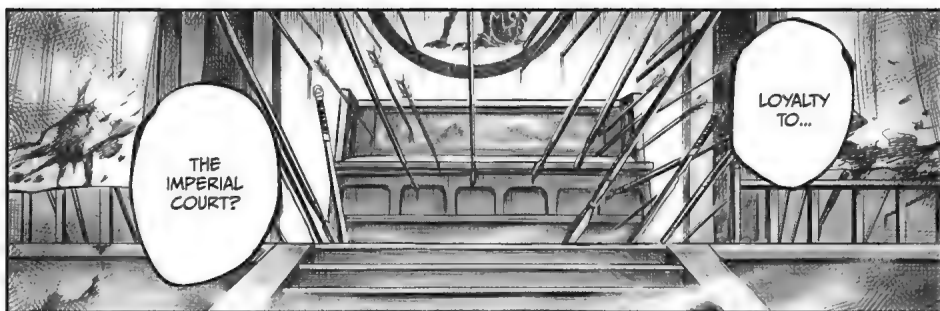
SEND
OUT
ORDERS.

CHOOSE
THREE TOP
OFFICIALS
OF LUOYANG
PALACE TO BE
BEHEADED.
SEND THEIR
HEADS TO THE
COUNTIES OF
HEBEI.











FOURTEENTH YEAR OF
TIANBAO (755 A.D.)
END OF THE YEAR

EASTERN CAPITAL
OF THE TANG

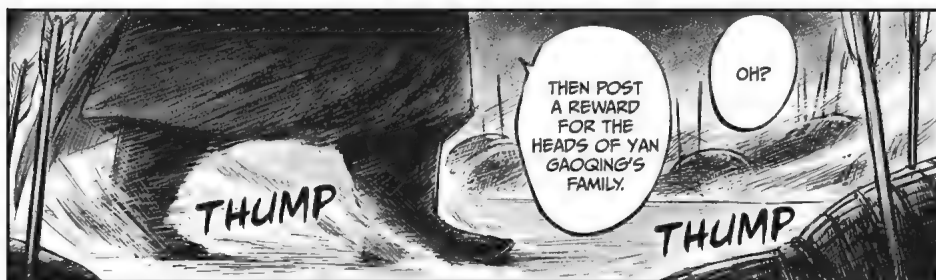
LUOYANG PALACE

THE LAST STAND OF JUSTICE:
CHAPTER XXV



THREE
GENERALS OF
YELUOHE WERE
ASSASSINATED
BY YAN
GAOQING.

GENERAL
AN!



THUMP

THEN POST
A REWARD
FOR THE
HEADS OF YAN
GAOQING'S
FAMILY.

OH?

THUMP



I'M AFRAID
THERE ISN'T
ANYONE LEFT
WHO WOULD
TAKE YAN
GAOQING'S
HEAD...



THUMP!

OH...



AND
PLEGGED
LOYALTY
TO THE
IMPERIAL
COURT.

AN LUSHAN'S
CLERICAL OFFICER

YAN ZHUANG

GENERAL...

SEVENTEEN
COUNTIES IN
HEBEI HAVE
JOINED YAN
GAOQING'S
REBELLION...

BOOK FOUR:
**THE LAST STAND
OF JUSTICE**

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XU XIANZHE
& ZHANG XIAO

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ASSASSIN'S
CREED
DYNASTY


Assassin's Creed® Dynasty, Volume 4

Story by Xu Xianzhe

Art by Zhang Xiao

Assistant Artists - Zhou Peican, Lin Lin, Yuan Yuan
Consulting Historian - Meng Xianshi
Produced by - New Comics
Special thanks - Mia Zhang and the Ubisoft Film and
Television team, Aymar Azaïzia, Fatiha Chellali
and Etienne Bouvier
Translator - Karen Lam
Proofreaders - Tay Weiling, Alex Lam
Editor - Lena Atanassova
Copyeditor - Kae Winters
Marketing Associate - Kae Winters
Digital Marketing Assistant - Kitt Burgess
Cover Design & Graphic Artist - Sol DeLeo
Editorial Associate - Janae Young
Retouching and Lettering - Vibraant Publishing Studio
Licensing Specialist - Arika Yanaka
Editor-in-Chief & Publisher - Stu Levy





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TOKYOPOP Inc.
4136 Del Rey Ave., Suite 502
Marina del Rey, CA 90292-5604

E-mail: info@TOKYOPOP.com
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PDF: 978-1-4278-7186-2
MOBI: 978-1-4278-7185-5
EPUB: 978-1-4278-7184-8

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